

Interim

By: Daniel "Pendragon"

With contributions by: Fellania, Susan, Lilly Jade and Madoushi

© 2010

Katrina, Fellania Bloodclaw, Susan and Lilly Jade are © 2010 by their players

Trogdor is a concept © Strongbad

All other characters and concepts unless otherwise referenced elsewhere in the story are © 2010 by Daniel "Pendragon"

Warning: *This story contains elements of open and/or alternative sexuality such as growth, expansion and inflation as well as sensually arousing or erotic circumstances. Reader discretion is advised.*

Rated: *R for Restricted*

~*~*~*~*~*~*~

Chapter 1: When we Last Left Our Heroes...

Oh... if all stories began this way. If all stories in the whole wide world could begin with a birth or a wedding, then that would be wonderful. So much pain, so much hurt, so much betrayal... it's about time that something like this happened near me.

By the way, my name is Pendragon; or Pen for those who are familiar with me. I'm a Fairy Dragon, and this is my shrine.

"And it's time for Lifestyles of the Shallow and Pedantic!" Bob gestured toward Pendragon as he swooped in; wearing a pinstripe suit and suddenly having a jaw so square you could sink the titanic on it, speaking with the accent of that douche bag Robin Leach. "That's right Poon... who are we observing today."

"Well Bob... what we have here is a notorious asshole." Chimed Poon, appearing in a sparkling dress with her breasts overtly oversized currently, she speaking in a show girl sort of voice. I pursed my lips in annoyance as my grip tightened on my pen and my eye twitched. "He's too big for his britches, and that's only at four feet tall! Ladies and gentlemen. This right here is an asshole. Pay attention now while we go through his house and..."

I snapped my fingers and the pair of them froze in place, being pinched by their fluttering fairy wings.

"Hey... that's not fair you son of a bitch..." Bob continued, still in character.

Rising to my feet and walking over to the two mated pair of powerful yet younger fairy dragons, I lifted my pen and popped both of Poon's boobs, and both of them deflated loudly before one of the sacks shot up and whizzed about the room like a balloon hemorrhaging air out of a hole in it. She faked a scandalous scream.

"Mah boobies! You popped mah boobies!" she fake-sobbed and gripped the flimsy front of her dress as the deflated titty landed on my nose.

"I swear... the two of you will be the death of me." I said with a twitching eye as I removed the deflated sack and flicked it at Bob. "Even in my youth I was never so much as an inane little prick as just one of you are."

“That’s right... I got more inaneity in my little finger than you do in your whole body!” *bob shouted and showed me his pinkie claw.*

“That wasn’t a compliment Bob. I asked you for a favor Bob in my time of need. I placed my trust in you that you’d accomplish it and not mess it up. One simple little favor that I could’ve done by myself, but it was too much of an inconvenience for me. So I asked you to step in and do me a favor.

“Doing that favor doesn’t mean that you and your mate and your entire brood can move in with me.”

Bob shook his head to clear it of the self mutation he did of himself to make his face and jaw look like that.

“Alright... fine. Throw us out in to the cold.” *He sniffed, and Poon lifted a flashlight and shone it down on his head as he curled up into a kneeling position in mid-air.* “We come to you... cold and hungry... we needed your help! And... hold on a second...” *he took a bottle of eye drops from a pocket and dripped them into his eyes and blinking let them droop out of his eyes as snot drained from his snout.* “There we go, where was I... oh yeah... we came to you... hungry! Starving even... and you throw us out.” *Poon began playing a sad tune on a violin, her face contorting like those guys who sometimes played violins that supposedly had intense emotions to them... as if the tune was really getting to her... or making her constipated and she was trying to cop a squat.* “We’ve wandered the streets... looking for food out of trash cans and dumpsters, trying to take care of our growing family... and now that we’re in a nice place... you want to throw us out! You’re a bad man... a... dragon-man.”

“Trogdor!” *Poon shrieked suddenly.* “Trogdor!”

“Trogdor is a man... he’s a... dragon man...” *Bob mused and the two of them began singing before I snapped my fingers and pointed at my eyes with two fingers.*

“Hey assholes... I’m up here.” *And they looked at me immediately, Poon hiding the violin and flashlight somewhere behind her. I could tell you where, but that would be a secret. Regardless, pinching the bridge of my nose:* “Ok... let me see here. You’re both wanting to stay in my shrine, a shrine of peace, with three hundred of your babies. Well immediately I have one solution to your growing family problem there...” *And biting my lower lip I gripped them both in two hands and shook them.* “Stop... FUCKING!”

“Well I’d wear a condom, but they don’t make any in my size! There aren’t any large enough.” *Bob complained.*

“He wears them as hats.” *Poon admitted and they both nodded sagely.*

“Gives new meaning to Jimmy cap... oh Great Maker!” *I moaned.* “Now you got me doing it. Ok... fine... you want to stay? Then we’ll make a bargain! You ok with that? Both of you? A bargain?”

“Bar-gain...” *they said in unison and pulled out notebooks before writing that down.* “I gain a bar?” *Bob grinned and waggled his eyebrows and then cowered as I growled at him.* “Sure boss... whatever you want boss.”

“Both of you?” *Poon nodded.* “Say it.”

“Sure boss!” *she chirped.*

“Ok... you can stay.” *They both gasped excitedly.* “But...”

“Oh here it comes.” *Bob moaned and I eyed him and he fell silent.*

“You, Pun’t’ang and all your brood whether they were born before now or after now, that so long as they live in this shrine they will cause absolutely no mischief, practical jokes, mayhem and so on, and you will all contribute to the well-being of the shrine. Should you breach this contract without my consent, then you and your entire family will spend a year in the underdark... and this time I may just forget you’re down there. I will not have another New York Fire on my hands, do you understand me?”

“Oh that was a wild night. They blamed it all on a cow and... and...” *Bob withered beneath my gaze and Poon followed suit.* “...We’ll be nice.”

“Then I agree as well.”

Draconic power had a particular trait to it called Dragon Lore. It was an enhancing enchantment that rested on top of psionics and magic, and combining the three created some truly spectacular effects. In that moment, Ba’ab and Pun’t’ang were surrounded in incredibly complex spell circles that turned thirty-three and a third degrees and then vanished.

“AH! Dick move!” *Bob exclaimed as I released them both.*

“I just want to make sure that you live up to your side of the bargain. It’s time to act your age, Bob...” *and I lifted a finger and pointed it at his nose.* “You’re way too old to be gallivanting about causing mischief and mayhem like a hatchling.”

“Yeah... whatever dad.” *Bob said and folded his arms tightly.*

“You want me to be your dad? Oh... I could be your dad.”

Poon began slapping her butt repeatedly and moaning erotically. “Who’s your daddy? Who’s your da-day?!!”

Bob folded his large ears over his face and made like an asthmatic. “Luke... I am your father...” *and he made a gripping hand toward me and made sounds of deep breathing before he started struggling for air, and throwing his ears up he gasped and panted.* “I can’t breathe in those things! Whew!”

I folded my arms and eyed them.

“Ok... fine... we’ll be good.” *They said in unison. Their duplicity was alarming.*

“Good... then here’s a list of chores.” *I smirked and produced a scroll that was their size and handed it to them, and the moment they gripped it, it unraveled right down to the ground and unrolled by several more inches.*

“Ah! Second dick move!” *Poon shouted this time as they gaped at it.*

“Yeah... but with more than three hundred of you, that list should only take the day.” *I smirked.* “Now get going. Those floors won’t sand themselves.”

I turned back to my writing, jotting down in the diary. I had a library of such tomes... each written on thin plates made of gold. Gold was forever, it never tarnished and had a long half life. So I wrote: ‘I was very heartened to hear that Sue was pregnant... and with her burden comes a certain air of responsibility and...’

“Oh... if all stories began this way. If all stories in the whole wide world could begin with a birth or a wedding, then that would be wonderful?’ What kind of sappy...” Bob began, and I looked up, and this time the pen, which was a metal etching tool that was tipped with a diamond head, snapped in my fingers. “Oh... damn. Ok I’m going.”

I sighed and massaged my temples. Fuck me... why did I let them stay?

I am Sue.

Counting back on my life... I had to admit that I never knew a time of leisure before. Life was hard and it was work. After I became a Lycan, despite that I had a patron to help me along, it was even harder work. So right now, here I was enjoying certain sensations that were like living in a paradise.

I was living in a room that was a traditional Japanese Feng Shui, the bed built into the floor with a great still pond before it, quoi fish swimming within its crystal waters. I slept naked next to a relatively powerful male, not necessarily strong... just powerful. Technically Madoushi was a magician or a mage... perhaps a sorcerer, but what I’ve learned about the Dreamtime thus far stated that Dreamtime was as non-traditional in regards to magic as one could get. Though it’s practitioners were considered ‘Shamans’ they weren’t shamans per-se. To hear Pen explain it, being able to manipulate the Dreamtime was like manipulating the machine code of reality. I wasn’t too sure of what machine code was so I looked that up.

Machine code is the most basic form of computing language in the world... also known as Binary. Little ones and little zeros. Hexmidecimal is built on top of binary, basic I/O Operating Systems like DOS and UNIX are built on top of that, and Graphical User Interfaces like Windows™ and Mac OS™ are what are built on top of those. What we see on an everyday basis is the Graphical User Interface – or GUI – of reality. Magic is like manipulating the Hex commands or the command-input Operating Systems beneath the GUI. Mady accomplishes his magic on a level well below conventional magic, hence, manipulate reality at the machine code level.

Pen says that there were Dreamtime Shamans that could remake the world in times past... and its potential quite possibly could even override Pen’s magic. With training of course.

I didn’t know how that was possible, a lot of that went right over my head... I was a Physical Mage after all... my magic worked inside the GUI of reality and worked along with its rules and regulations. If what Pen said is true, Mady could rewrite local physical laws to make me even more powerful. I was eager to try that some day.

Regardless, Mady was powerful in more ways than his mystical might. Though I was larger and stronger than he was, I nonetheless respected his ability to tip elephants with a flick of his pinkie. But there were other ways that he was powerful... more powerful than Lee was even... and that was in regards as to how well that man of mine was built... down there.

Finger point downward toward the loins.

Since returning from Lea Monde, the two of us had been making love at night to say goodnight and again in the morning to say good morning to each other. And his ‘key’ fit my ‘lock’ like it was made for it. Even as it was, here I was waking up to the late morning sun, the sheets having been thrown aside and Madoushi laying on his stomach next to me, arm about my middle and its hand elevated to hold onto my fat tit while Mew was nestled currently in a ball between my breasts.

I'd woken up for the past week like this, in varying degrees of disarray and covered with the remnants of lovemaking and experimenting with love and more love and kissing and... sigh... what a week. But after Wormwood and then Lea Monde, I was rather enjoying this. So was Mady. Poor fellah hadn't gotten his gun off in three centuries before meeting me, and at the same time had to deal with the aggravations of dying every few days or so in various ways. He's lived so many lives that way.

The warm rays of the sun slid slowly across me, caressing my naked skin, lighting and warming the mounds of my breasts as well as the mounds of my every heaving and surging feminine muscle on me, and moaning, trying to go back to sleep I laid there for as long as I dared... or at least till the shaft of sunlight moved off me again.

Having become a kitteh, I've come to understand why cat's like laying in sun rays. I liked being warm, I liked being comfortable... even more so than before.

Eventually though, I did wake up, cradling Mew in my arms as she stirred briefly, the dingle bell on her collar jingling briefly as she looked up at me in annoyance for being moved.

"Mmm... five more minute mom..." she mewed and then laid her head back down in my arms as I nonetheless rose and moved her to her basket before the window and laid her down on it. Ivan was lightly snoring beside it, using his hat as a pillow, his boots lightly laying on the floor beside him.

I then stood naked before the window, feeling the milk-laden weights of my heaving breasts dragging down on my chest as they wobbled subtly with my every move, the pair becoming pressed between the long pipes of my biceps as I took to looking out at the bay and the birds and things flying amidst the boats sailing in the water. These boats varied everywhere from massive enormous ocean liners and an American Aircraft Carrier to the small traditional junks with their pleated sails.

Before I'd become a Lycan, there was no way that I'd be walking around naked like this, even in the comfort of my own home, for fear that some random person would be spying upon me at a distance with a pair of binoculars. But running around naked as a mighty fem that was covered with fur and laden with muscle tended to give me the sort of confidence of walking down the open street naked if it were legal. And I was a strong, powerful fem... and I was going to become a mommy.

Lifting both muscular arms to the sides of the window to lean into it so that the kiss of both the sun and the wind could caress their swells and their teats, erecting them then with the mixture of cool air from the ocean and the warm touch of the sun, I closed my eyes and beamed upward at the sun. My arms hugged me then, either with thick Olympian male-sized biceps, I arched deeply, feeling like I was glowing from the inside, the sea air blowing against my body in a sudden rush, kissing my flesh, licking the sweat and the dried love juices against me like a big wet licking tongue from navel to neck, right between my tits, before great suckling mouths drew upon my teats and loins, I closed my eyes and breathed deeply.

And then ever so slowly I drew my hands backward and cradled my tummy. Somewhere inside me was the spirit of Pandora, now bonded to the growing body of an infant produced partly by me, and partly by Mady... or at least I hoped it was partly by Mady.

"Poor little one. You're such an unlucky little girl... to have suffered so much and now even before you're born we don't even know the identity of your real father." I whispered to my belly... looking at the heaving and tight abdominal muscles from between my breasts.

I wanted to give birth to her here in Japan... in all this comfort.

Saint Paul was a nice place, and living in Galtier Plaza, the tallest building in Saint Paul, it satisfied my kitty instincts for being really high up. But the smells that came from Saint Paul were very different than the ones that came from the sea. Saint Paul tended to smell differently depending upon which direction the wind blew and what time of year it was. In the spring there was the smell of the Slaughterhouses. The slaughterhouses weren't in production any more, those facilities had been moved well outside the cities further down river, but those yards still held cattle, and their smell had permeated the wood of that place so that it stank no matter what time of year it was.

In the summer, if the wind caught you just right there was a coal burning plant and garbage burning plant to the east of it, and let's not forget the lovely smell of the river whenever it got low. But nonetheless, the crisp air in the fall and winter made it worthwhile, especially when all the people all around were burning leaves in the fall.

Tokyo... had different smells.

It had the salty sea air every morning and evening as the tides came in and out, it had the smell of fish from one direction at times and there were hills of cherry blossoms that were in bloom at the moment around the shrine. Whenever the wind blew down the mountain – Mount Fuji that is – it brought crisp cool mountain air with it. Pen's shrine got the best of all of that. He'd chosen it in a place that was upwind from the city, or at least the sea air interfered with the city air to help keep the place crisp smelling, and the place was likewise in the lee of the geography of the volcano should it ever erupt again.

Pen mentioned that this shrine had stood in this spot in one form or another for nearly half a million years. Though the island of Japan has broken off from the main land, new islands rose or fell, the mountain itself erupted and deflated repeatedly, his shrine nonetheless had remained her for all that time.

I could feel the old magic here... it was ancient... very, very ancient. Older than the human race ancient. Pen had taught other dragons, taught Fae, taught elves, taught humans in their myriad of races, shapes and forms. This place was a place of peace, and I owed it to Pandora to give birth to her here.

She still needed a new name... at least that part was easy. We knew she was going to be a girl... so she'd need a girl's name eventually. Looking to the desk beside the window here – my favorite place to sit and read scrolls and books in study – I'd assembled several sheets of names both traditional and new to come up with the perfect name for her.

Mady and I had spent hours last night just thinking that up... till... well... till we got frisky. I blushed in thought about how creative that man was when he was enticing me, and I sighed in remembrance as my thighs pressed together as my loins did a few tricks between them. The very thought of Mady made me moist and short of breath with passion. The sound of his voice made me shiver with the same remembrance, and his touch made me swoon. Oh that man knew how to touch.

But taking a deep whiff of the air as I caressed my muscled navel, I opened my eyes and looked out over the wall of the shrine out at Tokyo Bay and the brilliant and marvelously sprawling city, home of the tallest building in the world.

Tokyo was a city that was at war with itself... between traditional and ultra-modern. Few US cities could claim that they did that, if any. But nonetheless, Tokyo smelled either of stale industry... or fish – Hmm... fish – but in the morning, unerringly, the wind blew in off the ocean and carried with it that nice salty sea smell that I'd grown to love. It was a soothing smell; somehow calming... and being in Tokyo at this time of year also meant that the cherry trees were all blossoming, so that cherry smell was prevalent in everything.

While I stood there however, enjoying the warmth of the morning mixed with the cool of the sea air, suddenly I was being embraced from behind... with a thick man-sausage fitting right in between the swells of my bottom, the thing thick with a mild chub as two strong hands embraced me. One of the arms that embraced me cradled my breasts, cupping one of them directly while the other cradled my belly and alternatively rubbed the cleft of labial muscles between my legs. I sighed nasally as a pair of lips began to peck their way along my thick neck and broad shoulders, a finger tip tweaking the nipple of the breast its hand cupped.

“Hello my lover.” I said quietly so as not to bother Mew.

She was very heavy with her kittens, and it would be very soon that she'd give birth to them.

“Hello my beloved.” Madoushi whispered in my ear, pausing only long enough in his affections to say that before once again continuing his soothing caressing of my body.

Just as expected, his hand cradling my belly slid downward to start playing with my sex, his fingers finding my clit and rubbing it. Almost immediately I creamed... from both my sex and teats. Those teats had firmed up and enlarged, their areola puffed out from pregnancy already, which likewise gave me a sensation of being perpetually aroused, while the breasts they capped had engorged by several cup sizes despite that I was siphoning milk from them daily... twice daily if you count Mad drinking his fill from them.

Milk... it does a body good. He'd even bulked up by at least twenty pounds since escaping Lea Monde with us. Fresh food and sunlight with good milk and descent rest did wonders on a body. His rosy body was firm and as supportive as a hardened shield about me. Despite that I was physically the greater of the two of us... he made me feel safe. Maybe Mady was using that fantastic power of his to soothe and entice me, doing things to me deep, deep inside me to make me react like this, but I didn't mind. He wanted to, it felt good so I was going to let him and that was that.

But as Mady soothed my engorged mammaries, either larger than my head, and my strong and powerful and firm labial muscles, I cooed and soothed, leaning forward against the window sill again and arching myself, rising on tip toe for my morning 'Hello' from my soon to be husband, while he kissed, massaged, soothed and caressed my developing body.

Pen had said that I was developing as a mother a little prematurely... Like the first six months of matriarichal maturation were happening all at once over these first few weeks. I was growing more buxom – a definite switch from the pert, tiny little breasts I used to have – more hippy, while the maturity of loins and breasts were becoming more defined but also more sensitive. But I was also strengthening all over again, as if my growing motherhood was a physical empowerment to me. I knew one of my chakras – probably the sixth chakra, or the Sacral or Svadhisthana Chakra – must be to blame for that causing the forced development of the other chakras which in turn were buffing me out slowly and methodically.

...And I didn't even need to exercise.

My hips were wider, like I'd mentioned, the pair shoulder-width now. When I was a human they were narrow, girlish, but now that I was a mommy, they'd grown wide into what many would call 'good child-bearing hips'. Many of the women here in the shrine said that I had the sort of hips that were good for baring sons. I'd just smile at them and curtsy, thanking them for the comment. Little did they know that I bore one of the most famous of feminine bodies in all of human history... the only more well-known woman would perhaps be Eve herself, the mother of our race. But these wide hips narrowed quickly into a slender yet muscular belly before immediately

flaring wide again into the long lats and broad flaring dorsal muscles that supported my upper body and the grand tits that decorated them.

I'd been remade from my mother's scrolls into a female that was much given to pleasure... but after that pleasure I was likewise much given to physical strength and power that I'd as of yet seen even a man hold. Motherhood was only enhancing those traits.

I wanted a dozen babies if I could handle it... if Mady could handle it too. I didn't plan on living forever, but there was much one could do in the lengthened lifetime of a Lycan.

Mady's affections soon got me into position as my back arched, his kisses on my back, and after a little work I felt his manliness slide into my womanhood smoothly, his penile ridges rubbing against my vaginal ridges in an enticing penetration against each other that got me to clap on him and bite my lip and roll my eyes back in elation. A passionate sigh escaped my nose as he massaged my bottom as we began our morning greeting to each other, my breasts wobbling while I breathed long and deep with every stroke.

"Wha... oh for crying out loud." Ivan groaned as he awoke, stretched and yawned before placing his hat on his head. "She's already pregnant! You don't need to hump her anymore."

"No... I don't need to." Mad smirked. "But I want to. And don't you think I don't know you would do Mew if you had the chance, Ivan."

"Oh I want to... but she bites me whenever I try now. Something about me hurting our kittens..."

"Yes, but Sue isn't that far along, and I want her right now."

"And I want him to too." I murred deep in my throat, swallowing with what felt like him probing me to the base of my throat.

"Yeah... but do you have to do that right over my mate?"

"It won't matter if she doesn't wake up. And by the way Ivan, you might get more loving from her if you service her more." I smirked at him while my vaginal tract was probed repeatedly, I rising up on tip toe like a ballerina as Mad pulled at my hips for a better stroke.

"Sure... sure... but she's nine weeks pregnant! I'm not going to..."

"Not sex her... not yet... but serve her." I smirked and closed my eyes and leaned toward the open window, milk leaking from my teats and rolling down the fat swells of either breast as Mad's motions pleased me in a particularly soothing way. It got my toes to spread and then curl. "You know... massage her... be kinder to her. Let her know you really care. Tell her you love her."

"I'm not human..." Ivan said as he took his hat off and fluffed it, and then sighed. "Does that really work?"

"It works for me." Madoushi smirked, and shoved himself even deeper into me, lifting me off the ground now and I bit my lower lip and trembled as he did. I might be stronger than him, but he was still strong enough to support me off the ground if need be.

“So I see.” *Ivan mentioned with a raised eyebrow at us.* “But for now, I’m going to go check in with Tanya. She’ll want to know what I’ve been up to. She is after all my human... sort of.” *Ivan smirked and snapped his fingers and disappeared, leaving Mad and me to our own devices again.*

Oh this was wonderful... soon I was going to be a bride, and soon thereafter I was going to be a mommy! Life couldn’t get much better than this!

My name is Fellania Bloodclaw.

I knew a draw inside me, a pulling sensation. I knew a direction unlike any I’d ever known before in my life. It was a palpable situation that pulled, directed, and compelled me in the most nagging of ways. It came with an interest in a man coupled with the most accursed thing in womankind, and that was the so called ‘*Biological clock.*’ That clock went tick-tock-tick-tock continuously, and every tick and every tock the weight of that pulling force inside me increased as assuredly as a winding rubber band. Oh sure, that band had lots and lots of ability to twist... and to grind... and to stretch, but a band only had so much elasticity before it snapped.

And as that band wound and bound up, I could feel it drawing me ever closer toward a man, a man trapped in ice so ancient and pure that the ice was blue. But this man, this being from an ancient time, resembled so much of the face of a man I saw only snippets of in my dreams... like a half-remembered memory from so very long, long ago.

These dreams were often romantic... and sometimes erotic, and even as I awoke it was with the lingering sensation of his hands upon my breasts, his loins and my loins coupled lovingly in a union so immaculate that it must be divine. So divine as to last across the ages from the there and then to the here and now.

Pen had told me and Sue separately – I heard Sue relay this to me – that there was no such thing as reincarnation. Dead is dead... and not even a being of his ability could raise a spirit that has gone on. But then at the same time he tells Sue and me that we’re the spitting images of our first mothers, women who existed more than three hundred millennia ago, two women who’d happened to know each other and just so happened to last know each other in this region known as Japan... when Japan itself was a part of the Chinese Mainland and that mainland was also a part of the super continent known as Pangea. Though he mentioned ‘*dead is dead*’ he also hinted at ‘*that which has gone on*’. It suggested that a soul could be brought back and perhaps manipulated in that tenuous moment between death and afterlife.

Noah’s flood and countless cataclysms have happened since that which had sundered the whole world time and time again, the magnetic shifting of the poles, an ice age or two, countless tectonic movements, near Extinction Level Events, and so on and so forth...

The face of Earth was nothing, absolutely nothing in comparison to what it was those three hundred thousand years ago, but nonetheless, this land – the land of Japan – still drew me to it, still wanted me to be here. The source of all of that, the source of all this draw, was none other than Mount Fuji itself, an ancient volcano that my first mother had been bound to somehow since she was a young woman. It was the home of White Oak, my staff, and somewhere inside my heart I felt another draw in me to remain here.

I mean, I was an American, that was my home over the seas, but I was rapidly coming to love this place. It was so peaceful, so serene and quiet, and the land accepted me like a prodigal child.

So as I awoke that day a week after Sue, Remy and I had left – escaped – Lea Monde, naked, grasping the sheets that had knotted up somehow between my legs in the night to simulate a... well I won't tell you what they were simulating, but now with a renewed strength that had been enhanced from my own experiences in Lea Monde, I felt a tickle of additional strength coming into me thanks to this land. It flared me, it thickened me little by little each day.

I lifted an arm, looking at thick forearms and beefy biceps with a supple layer of skin around the hardened chords conjoined by webbings of tendons and veins, and I beheld the strength, the sheer, unmitigated strength that was my life's blood, my birthright through maturation over generations and generations of bears to become... this.

They called my first mother the 'Mountain Queen,' I thought, not knowing how I knew that, but I did know that. She was so big and so strong that only she could tame the fiery mountain. It was said that she was the one who calmed Mount Fuji.

That mountain wanted me, it... *loved* me... it was an odd sensation to feel the land be so affectionate to oneself, especially after having to coax every little thing out of the earth back home, but it was like that this land was my perfect shamanic synergy. Many Shamans and Druids spent their whole lives and never found a plot of land that acutely formed such a symbiosis with them. In my case... the land itself called to me and I came. My home in America was one thing, it was used to me, but here... it was like a long lost parent welcoming its child back with open arms to embrace me to its voluminous bosom and give me suck.

It was so... sensually wonderful.

With naked breasts wobbling and rolling over my ribs, the pair super engorged into great rounded sacks that held themselves up atop the hardened and rounded pectorals I possessed, I rose to my rump and one arm and sighed, rubbing at my eyes to clear them of sleep with the knotted sheet between my legs still. Then rubbing the supremely muscled tummy I had even in human form while my long hair fell over one shoulder, I smacked my lips and looked about the supple and earthen room in which I was stationed. Already nearby was a tray with a clay pot of water sitting on a bed of coals to keep it hot, while an upside down hand bowl rested nearby with a metal tea leaf dipper resting beside the bowl. More bowls with condiments – honey, lemon and sugar – rested nearby for taste. If only I could use those for taste. Adding sweeteners would lessen the potency, so I had to drink the bitter-tasting tea – like earl gray or green tea – in order to douse a second fire that was in me.

That twisting band inside me generated heat... a sexual heat... the longest insurgence of it yet. There were no other bears here for me to attract, and it was just lasting and lasting.

Fingering the tea pot and then turning the bowl over, I placed the already prepared metal tea dipper into the bowl and poured water over it.

There were many natural alchemists in this shrine – Pen being among them – herbalists, Eastern Alchemists and individuals who had an ancient and devout knowledge of herbs and teas, how to steep them, how to cure and preserve them... how to enchant them... and what mixture of leaves all together would make a woman like me, a bear-woman like me, entering into her deepest, longest heat in her lifetime, to cool those sensations that roiled in my belly and loins morning, noon and night and make them at the very least bearable.

Pen did this without being asked. True he didn't ask for permission, but for granting me relief from those damnable sensations that made me stupid and loopy, loose my usually unflappable composure, was a gift that I wasn't eager to scoff at or refuse. I could think clearly after drinking this tea despite how deep the heat was getting inside me, how

long it roiled, and a cup in the morning and a cup in the evening were able to allow my body to experience the heat but for my mind to mostly ignore its mental affects.

And his gifts just kept coming... and it all began with White Oak.

Replacing the clay pot with water back into the coals, letting the leaves in the tea dipper steep for the prescribed amount of time, I removed the Tea Dipper, picked up the hand bowl, turned it a quarter turn to the right as was the custom, and cupping the hand bowl like a woman should in the orient, as was custom, I drank deeply from it.

There were specific ways to hold tea, one for a man, another for a woman, either having different methods depending upon ceremony or causality. Tilting the bowl and taking the next sip of the tea, I relished those first few moments where the burning fire in my pelvis and loins was gently quenched by the effects of the tea sliding into my blood stream.

That fire slowly had been crawling up my pelvis each day. Pen himself had checked up on me, markedly looking into when that sensation of rising heat got up to my head. Once the burning got that high... I risked madness. I'd gone nearly two decades now without a man in me... my body was markedly protesting the need to breed.

Damn these heats! It was an evolutionary thing, a super ovulation that required one to breed, required a mating to keep our species going. Those who went without satisfying the heat in their bodies had the potential on going into a sexual rampage, hunting for a mate, while still others simply fried their brains and received serious brain damage from the lack of a mating.

As such, matings were typically arranged the moment a mother knew she was ripe with a female cub. The problem for me was... there weren't any males. My den was almost entirely female, and what males were left were either too old or too young to mate with and... and... there had always been that insurmountable sensation in me that there was someone special for me. I dreamed of him, I kept dreaming of him, and now that I saw his face, knew that he was real...

I sighed and looked to my hand again, the mighty woman's hand attached to the impeccable forearm muscle, bulging separated biceps and chorded shoulder.

The tension from my heat had clenched my muscles almost constantly with the tension. I was thickening and growing partly from accomplishing a sort of isometric weight lifting... muscles so taut and tense that they were undergoing steady growth just by the sheer sake of being so tense all the time. And I was definitely growing stronger, especially since leaving Lea Monde. The other day, while in my human form, I'd bent a washer in two between my abdominal muscles. Before I could only do that trick in my full hybrid form. Shortly after then I cracked a walnut that way, and then folded the base of a pop can in half in one hand. You think that's an easy task?! You try that and tell me how well you do. Just the base of the can, pinching the very bottom in just your fingers.

And all this was in my human form.

Each day when new clothes were delivered to my room, they were a size or a fraction of a size larger than they were before. Pen's thoughtfulness at hand... or at least he had well trained and thoughtful servitude in the shrine.

Sighing again and rubbing the sheet into my loins – I knew they were moist, they were moist every morning now – I gestured with my hand and the windows swung silently and easily open to allow a shaft of beautiful sunlight into my room along with the breath of the late morning air wafting in with it. Immediately the glorious visage of White Oak shivered in the wind, its leaves rustling in greeting as it seemed to untwist and unfurl its leaves from sleep as those

leaves glittered in the morning light like alabaster, opal and mother of pearl. I smiled in greeting at the ancient oak, and drinking the rest of my tea and setting the bowl down, I rose and stepped over to its broad planter.

“Good morning friend.” I greeted to it and again it waved in the air.

It was a tree, and though it could remain eternally as a staff if it so chose, but I wanted it – Him? Her? Did it really matter? – to remain happy so I planted it so it could feed from the soil and the sunlight here on the ground floor where my room was. I caressed its bark with one hand and it shivered and twisted lightly for me, its glistening and waxen bark coiled and molted into arcane and natural symbols of curves and lettering.

It loved me... loved me because it loved every woman in my family line who'd ever wielded it. It was sad when each of my predecessors left, but it was overjoyed with each new wielder who took it up. Even as I stood there it flowered suddenly with pink-white flowers in imitation of all the cherry trees that flowered all around the shrine in grand groves. Flowering was something no White Oak did, but it was an ancient and magical tree, and did things with its leaves and bark that no tree should do anyways. Even as I stood there unabashedly naked before its celestial glory, a new white-green vine extended from a branch and drooped with a cluster of prickly nuts that flared and thickened and ripened from nuts into a luscious sort of prickly pear.

“Thank you.” I smiled grandly and embraced it, my thick and rounded melons for breasts cleaving to the sides of its warmed bark.

White Oak shivered as I stepped back, and reaching up I accepted her gift. I didn't break it off the tree, rather the tree pulled its branch back with the new growth and it came off the prickly pear easily, leaving the fleshy fruit with a soft nut-like exterior. It had to be broken open and peeled like an orange, but the sweet fruit on the inside was luscious, filling... and most of all, White Oak's nectar reduced the heat in my loins. What was more was that that one little fruit filled even a big lady like me, made me feel awake and strong, able to deal with the day.

“Delicious.” I told the tree and it shivered again, coiling like another might shrug bashfully, and holding the fruit and nibbling at it, I moved to the open window, still naked, feeling the soothing embrace of the wind coupled with the strengthening touch of the mountain's roots beneath my feet. Oh, but those roots held fire beneath them... engorging fire like the veins of the great mountain.

Whether the mountain were a mother or a father depended upon the moment, regardless, it was ancient, supportive and protective, and when angered... well... the only natural force that rivaled the unmitigated power of a volcano was the super nova from a detonating star. Not even an earthquake can compare with the unrivaled power and energy that the earth expends in order to erupt a volcano.

White Oak waved happily in the wind behind me as I stood before the window... vulnerable head, chest, and pelvis out in the open currently to whoever might look in my direction. But White Oak would warn me if there were praying eyes about. It was protective of me... hence why its preferred form was a staff. Only when its barbs needed to be bared against vampires did it ever become a spear.

In nature, White Oaks could grow to be *immense* trees, and yet this one was only slightly taller than I was. It held so much great power though, so much pristine and natural beauty, and given its age, it should be the size of the oh-so-rare millennium trees, this tree being nearly as old as Pendragon himself was. It'd been ancient even before my first-mother ever plucked it from the cinder cone atop Mount Fuji, just prior to the mountain erupting.

This tree radiated feelings of life and love, natural mysticism, and affection for me and my bloodline.

To cut a White Oak prematurely down was now a crime in Japan. It and its ilk were considered sacred now, especially after so many much of the other white oaks had been cut down for creating the Bokken, a wooden training sword that became popular in the sixties to eighties, even in America, especially when martial arts were just beginning to be world known. More trees were cut down for walking sticks and canes, and essentially the tree had become as rare and as protected in Japan as the Black Thorn was in Ireland.

Walking naked to the window, looking out the window at the beautiful, monumental and white-capped mountain that was Mount Fuji, I remarked at the sacred symbols that made up my bloodline. The sacred white-capped mountain, the sacred White Oak tree.

Thoughts of a family crest of a White Oak before the silhouette of Mount Fuji came to mind. But there was another family crest, one that I was more familiar with, and that was of a black paw with a single red claw over a field of silver.

It'd been different three hundred thousand years ago... tree covered and taller, it's base coming right to Pen's shrine here, so that a part of his shrine was literally built into its rock. In its old age, the mountain had flattened downward and gone largely dormant. Oh it was still alive alright... alive and vibrant, with a core of fire that burned with heat and power that only a really old volcano could manage to do. The sacred peak was the most loved sight in all of Japan, and Pen had chosen his shrine location wisely for the peace that it radiated at this very point.

Even Pendragon, the mighty Elder Wyrn that he was, resided at the roots of that mighty peak. Even he dared do nothing more than an occasional sojourn to the peak of my family's mountain.

With my magic, I summoned the tea pot and the tea dipper and poured myself another bowl of the bitter tea, drinking it while leaning on the window sill with my broad hips and thick powerful yet rounded bottom, smiling at the shining sun on my face while I looked up at Amaterasu's brilliance, Amaterasu being the Japanese Goddess of the Sun, exemplified with the game Okami.

The cherry trees were blossoming, the mountain was still snow-capped, the view of the bay was forefront in my view, the wind was warm with just enough of a cooling breath from the bay to make this a perfect day.

After finishing the tea and a swivel of the body with a jostling of breasts, I paused and saw yet another gift in my room, and stooping by the bed on the floor to place the cup on it, I rose and lifted up the first layer of a patterned kimono and smirked at it.

Unfortunately... I was not the sort of woman to wear a *'traditional'* kimono. That's not a shot mind you... it's just a fact of my body type. Most Japanese women were small and petite. Generations of breeding a preferred small and petite woman – right up to forcing their feet into tiny shoes to make even those small – bred a woman that was typically small in height, slender of body and small of chest. Like the women it was designed for, the Kimono was designed to wrap the legs, making it difficult to move quickly, while the flaps over the front could enclose the nearly flattened chest easily. But my bust was far too large for the two flaps to contain it, and if I were to put on a traditional Kimono, then my breasts would perpetually be out in the open and naked.

This was a modified Kimono to fit a woman like me, a woman who weighed over three hundred pounds of sheer unrestrained muscle, with breasts that were like the block and tackles for an ocean liner. There was a chest wrap of patterned white silk, along with a set of feminine patterned underpants, a white under robe and a patterned outer robe. The chest wrap was meant to hem in my breasts and cover the naughty bits that the kimono's folds didn't cover, and likewise, this kimono had cut open sides to allow for my broad, powerful legs, with the cut rising up to just over the hips. Two long thigh socks and slippers likewise completed this wonderfully beautiful gift.

The layers of under cloth, including a set of Oriental style underpants – the kind that flossed the butt and had a wide wedge across the loins and wrapped the waist with twists of cloth – were soft and kind to a woman’s skin... especially taken into the sensitivity of my flesh at the moment in my... *heightened* state of sexual awareness. The chest wrap actually separated and supported both breasts first before wrapping them while at the same time allowing for the flesh to breathe. It felt like the most comfortable bra I’d ever worn... which was saying something... especially when no store carried a bra with your measurements.

A hundred and ten triple-Z was not the sort of bra most bra makers get, and I always got calls or emails from the manufacturers wondering if I’d entered the measurements in right. I swear to the Maker they must think I’m a really, really fat woman, and after that one time where they sent me back a bra that I broke the next day trying to put it on because they changed the measurements on me and I didn’t know it... simply because they said that no woman had measurements like mine. Then they had the gall to say I couldn’t return it since I broke it regardless of their error and... oh! It just made me not want to wear more than an athletic bra ever again. At least those were one-size-fits all, but I didn’t like how they kept trying to push my boobies together like they were trying to make one big good one.

To have actual support after years of not having one... I actually cooed and rubbed the cloth into the soft sensitive mammaries and contemplated on giving Pen a big hug and a kiss for all these nice comforts he’d been giving me as of late.

True to his word... he wanted us to relax and be happy after our exertions.

I donned then a layer of soft silk followed by two layers of supple linen – previous garments proffered to me as a part of the Kimono – and finally by an emerald green and amber brown with white trim Kimono that complimented me in every way. Finally I donned the high leg socks that left the toes open, and even a pair of Japanese sandals with their high wooden slats – made to keep their wearers largely out of puddles and the mud – were actually strong enough to support my phenomenal weight.

Then stepping in that rocking motion the sandals required for every foot step – there was either that or the shuffling motion thing – and making my way back to White Oak, I only touched its bark and it twisted immediately, surging around my arm and up to the peak of my head where it braided my hair with its trailers and white-green new growths and made a beautiful hair-dressing that curled my hair beautifully and crowned it with hair rods and a filigree of white leaves.

Sighing and smoothing the kimono over myself, I then headed to the door, and sliding it open, took a deep breath... a moment before a powered floor sander, being ridden by no less than a dozen multi-colored and miniature versions of Pendragon slid across the floor, banged against a wall and dropped a silk painting, spun in a full circle, whipping along power chord behind it, and then bounced down a flight of stairs leading into the basement.

I saw this amidst...

“You’re doin’ it wrong... stupid!” one little drake shouted up at the driver.

“I yam not! I got it! I got it!” the driver, who was wearing a pilots fur-lined leather helmet along with a pair of goggles and a bomber jacket who was riding the handlebars like it was a chopper.

“I yam supah-man!” another little fairy dragon said... being that it was a she, I think the correct term was draca, but she was doing the superman atop the floor sander’s chassis.

And when they went down the stairs, they all made silly sounds like teeth chattering and repeating “Ai-ya-huh” sounds from many little voices as the machine fell on each step as the power sander struck another walls, careened against two others and sped off in another direction down the next flight of stairs.

“The hell was that?” I blinked, and looking back from whence the contraption came, I saw a swath in the polished floor and an extension cord that looked to be a mile long crisscrossing the halls, draping over random objects and was tied in a big bow-tie knot to make a web right in the middle of the corridor.

Other guests were sticking their heads out of doors as I ventured out into the corridor, stepping well over the cable on the floor to avoid it tangling up on me all of a sudden.

“**BOB!**” I heard Pendragon rage suddenly from across the building, and suddenly that Bob fellow that transported Sue, Mad, Remy and me from France back to Japan came rolling down the stairs up the hall – literally rolling, bouncing like a ball – and slapped hard against one of the walls.

“Oh shit, oh crap, oh shit, oh crap, crap, crappity-crap-crap-crap!” And he leaped up and quickly untangled the chords, giving the ball that was reminiscent of the balls of Christmas lights most people have to untangle when putting up their decorations. Tugging on this, gnawing on that, he got it to untangle and with a pull a ceiling tile broke just above his head and the powered sander fell out of it with all the miniature multicolored fairy dragons still hanging onto it and looking frazzled. I noted now that there were tassels on the handlebars of the machine.

The machine ground a circular sanded spot in the middle of the floor for a few brief seconds before Bob yanked on the chord that was powering it to stop it.

“Damn it... we’re in trouble! Put this thing back where you got it!” Bob hissed.

“**BOB!**” Pen’s voice cried from across the shrine again, amplified subtly now, and Bob winced.

“Definitely in trouble!” and he yanked on the chord and it wrapped itself up into coils before he crawled all over the machine, knocking the little ones off and then knuckle-dusting the one still trying to ride it like a chopper, who was singing *‘Born to be Wild.’* Till he was silenced with the knuckle punch.

“You!” and he pointed to a little pink one. “Take this and this chord back where it came from! The rest of you...” and it may’ve been me, but it literally looked like he pulled about a dozen hand sanders out of his butt and threw them at the little ones. “Sand! *By hand,*” he said through gritted teeth while clenching the air with all four hands. “And you... quickly... put those pictures back up... straight!”

“But dad!” they complained as a chorus. “This is faster!”

“Faster yes... but noisy. Pen doesn’t like noisy! Now ye bunch of festering gobs... get to work while I go kiss the Great Wym’s ass for your collective screw up! Or do you want to be banished?” They cringed and bob glowered back at them before scurrying off on all sixes. “Coming! Coming!”

Not wanting to miss this as the little ones, Bob’s children apparently, began to half-heartedly sand the floors – “Left the circle... right the circle... hey look at me! I’m Ralph Macchio!” – I hurried off toward the central chamber.

Padding along, the sandals clicking with nearly every step, I arrived at the main hall where several other of the house denizens, those who served here, were hiding behind corners and giggling or chuckling. I didn't know how Pen was doing it, but there was a thick throbbing vein pulsating through his head plates.

"What did I tell you... what did I tell you Ba'ab? This is a shrine of peace!"

"Oh is it? I didn't notice with you yelling at me all the time." Bob smirked.

"You and your brood have already destroyed the peace, so why should I continue being peaceful when the lot of you are so intent on riding a stolen power sander through my shrine at seven in the morning?"

"Ah... I'll have to get back to you on that one."

"Translation: you don't have a reason. Clearly... you are what the humans call an irresponsible father."

"Now that's hitting below the belt." Bob pointed out and Pen snapped his staff right between Bob's legs.

"No... *that's* hitting below the belt." Pen smirked.

"OH, right in the mommy daddy button!" Bob squealed in a high-pitched voice and fell over sideways gripping his groin.

"Really? ... Must've been a lucky shot."

"They were right between my legs! How could you think you missed..." Bob was saying in a high-pitched voice before he paused and then stared at Pen. "Oh... you cold maniacal bastard. I'll have you know I'm quite endowed."

"That's '*well-endowed*', Ba'ab." Pen smirked. "Your standards must've gone down. Now look..." and Pen rose into the air, and as he floated passed Bob, Pen reached out and grabbed the smaller blue drake by one ear and tugged lightly on it, Bob followed immediately up into the air and fluttered his wings to release the pressure as Pen landed on a window sill, dragging Bob to the window. "See that? See that whole area? You, and only you, will rake the sand, wash the rocks, trim the grass with hand sheers and turn the soil in the garden. In the mean time... you will let your entire brood know that if I hear another power tool, it will mean punishment... for both you and the broodling. Do you understand me Ba'ab?"

"Loud... and... clear." Bob mentioned and Pen let go of his ear and the thing retracted like a blind, flipping repeatedly over itself somehow before Bob grabbed it and yanked it back out again.

"Now get to work." Pen finished and hopped off the sill and began walking away.

"You know... you could be a little gentler."

Pen stopped, and his one visible hand on his staff clenched.

"I have already tried being gentle with you Ba'ab. I've tried quiet suggestion, I tried being direct... and damn me for the past three thousand years, you've proven yourself to be a perpetual thorn in my side... and when you started breeding you proved yourself to be a cancerous, malevolent and viral thing. In Draco's name, Ba'ab... you will either toe the line, or I swear I'll plough you head-first into the underdark like an overpaid football player spikes the

ball into the end zone. And so help me, I'll send your beloved mate and all your entire brood down there with you, letting each and every last one of them know that they're there all because of you."

"That's... that's cruel!" Bob blanched.

"Bob... I'm a million and a half years old. After as much patience as I've already exerted against you, I am at my breaking point. If anything... that's justice. Now get to work. You'll either wind up a just, descent dragon, or you'll end up forever committed to the underdark and its denizens."

And Pen stamped his staff against the floor in a final note that the conversation was over and walked off.

Bob – or Ba'ab – drooped his head, and reaching behind himself pulled out a pair of hand sheers. "I'm Pendragon... blah-blah-blah... you're a stupid lazy dragon Bob. Get to work bob. Blah-blah-blah!" and Bob threw a raspberry after Pen had left, dragging down an eyelid to show off his eye.

Hurrying off and hopping through a window, I soon heard what sounded like a lawn mower, but a quick look outside saw what was best described as a tumbling ball of quickly moving body parts and clipping hand sheers... kinda like the Tasmanian Devil from Looney Toons. Blinking at this and turning quickly, following after Pen, I caught up with him at a bridge overlooking one of the many quoi ponds.

Pen was throwing bread crumbs to them.

Like he always was outside, he had his head covered and only two arms visible. Hand wrappings and his robes covered his fingers. I knew he did this because of the probability of satellites, and there were four probable governments who could immediately see him in his shrine: Japanese, American, Russians and Chinese.

"That seemed a little drastic." I mentioned.

"Seems... I assure you Lady Fellania... it is quite an optical illusion." Pen mentioned. "If I could've gotten away with something kinder, I would've... but I've attempted to be kind for ages now... and even my nigh inexhaustible patience is quite exhausted."

"Your patience is?" I mentioned and he nodded. "There's a saying that the older a person is the more patient a person is."

"Or the less patient." Pen smirked. "They're called '*crotchety*'. But like I mentioned and you undoubtedly heard from our heated exchange... how well is one able to wait after nearly thirty thousand years?"

"Ask my first mother..." I mentioned and laid both hands upon the railing of the arching bridge. "By the way... thank you so much for this kimono. It looks beautiful and feels comfortable."

"You're welcome." He said gently and then threw the last handful of bread. "It fits you well."

The buzzing of Bob rushing back and forth in his menial labor neared. "H-how soon." I asked suddenly and gripped the railing... anxious and eager.

"How soon till he thaws?" Pen asked and I nodded vigorously, not able to keep the palpable excitement and anticipation from my face. "I'll be beginning a transfusion in about an hour... if you'd like to be present."

I nodded vigorously again and licked my lips this time. No one was allowed in that chamber without Pen present... not even me. He explained it that what he was doing was of the utmost delicacy that he couldn't in good thought damage the possibility of failure by opening even accident to that chamber. The thawing was agonizingly slow too... but it needed to be. It needed to be gentle and it needed to be delicate or the shock or the ravages of time would kill Anhogamon.

"What is the transfusion for?" I asked.

"Three hundred thousand years of time have passed, Fellania. By my last check, Anhogamon wasn't an immortal when I last saw him. Air wrecks insane amounts of havoc to a person who's been preserved. The moment the air touches a preserved thing, it applies that much time that has passed upon the thing. Parchments yellow and wither, pages crumple and blacken, metals tarnish and blacken..."

"And flesh disintegrates and blackens... falling off the body." I finished with a grim thought.

"For as much time that has passed, he'd disintegrate right down to powdered bone dust, Fellania... but that's not the only problem." He stepped away and I quickly followed.

"Not the only problem?!" I asked, feeling panicky all of a sudden. This wasn't because of my heat... no... this was fear of being denied something I'd been missing my whole life... possibly longer. "What else can there be?!"

"Three hundred thousand years ago... Lycan were called Spirit Folk. They were originally the offspring of demon remnants and human beings."

"D-demons?!"

"Not all demons are bad... most are... but not all." Pen corrected. "Back then, a Spirit Folk, also known as a Hengeyokai, had a choice of being a man or a man-beast... but it wasn't their conscious desire that made this... it was their subconscious wishes that deemed whether they are human or not. In time, Lycan began to learn to control their forms and were able to change more quickly as time progressed... likewise they learned to transform into other shapes, obtaining more hybrid and full beast forms even though they continue to exemplify a requirement to transform when the moon is full, and are harmed by precious metals and magic. A throwback from their demonic origins... something that is ingrained into you upon the cellular level.

"Three hundred thousand years of evolution have happened on earth, Fellania... but thankfully his body is still old enough that he can still be considered protean. A part of the transfusion is a necessity of making him capable to absorb the synergy of the Lycan if he is to survive. If this adaptation isn't made, the world itself may reject him. Paradox is a powerful force, and it allows for nearly no errors."

"What would happen if you fail?" I asked.

"Essentially... he dies." Pen said and paused in his step to look directly up at me to enunciate the seriousness of the matter at hand. "I swear I have made all necessary preparations, and have checked them twelve times."

"And what does your all-powerful future vision see?" I asked with a smirk.

Pen turned and smirked at me. "I don't know... it's a mystery."

“Oh I hate it when you say that.” I said and folded my incredibly muscular arms with a return smirk, cradling both breasts as I did, but then the humor soon died in me. “Do you... have any idea on how long it’ll take till he thaws?”

“This isn’t like taking a chunk of meat out of the freezer, Fellania. Defrosting a living thing is delicate, but if everything remains constant – which it rarely does – I suspect that you shouldn’t have to wait more than a few days. You understand that there will be a period of coping, correct? Physical... spiritual... social... mental...” he paused even longer and eyed me. “...emotional.”

“I-I understand.” I nodded and fidgeted. Absentmindedly I thought for a moment of feeling a dick sliding in me, my thighs pressing together, and I shook off the thought.

Another concern I had would be... how would he take me? Would he refuse me, push me away, send me off? On the one hand I hoped for a magical reunion, and something out of one of those sloppy romance novels, you know the sorts where all the guys were super muscular and all the gals were super busty in scantily and often revealing clothing who met, romantic music came up and they fell instantly into each other’s arms in love with each other. Even that seemed a little too far-fetched for me to even hint at hoping at... but I could still fantasize.

Whenever I thought of that man, that hard, chiseled man with his noble, beautiful features, a feral man that was barely refined by the empowering ways of a tradition of Bushido that was as old as mankind was, I considered things. Wild... sexy and erotic things... his hands upon my body, upon my breasts as I churned and swooned to his touches and kisses as he touched me in places where not even doctors or my mother had touched me since I was an infant.

Even as I stood there before Pen my mind got lazy and I murred softly to myself, feeling the trickle of sweat seeping between my breasts as I broke out in perspiration even as I wobbled slightly from nearing a swoon before I shook my head to clear it immediately and recover from the lazy mind. Thankfully... only Pen saw, and he was kind enough not to bring notice to the moment of weakness... or share it with anyone else.

But regardless... I think... I think it was possible that I did fall in love at first sight... now only if Anhogamon did the same thing in return...

“Your desire to help him is admirable, Fellania,” Pen said then, breaking into my thoughts. “But you should be prepared... he might want more from you than you give.”

Amidst my thoughts on how much I wanted from him, and calculations on how much I was already willing to give, this took me by surprise.

“What do you mean?” I asked, blinking with a stunned look on my face.

“You shall see.”

“Damn it!” and I stamped a foot, causing the wooden bridge to creak and rattle beneath my strength. “Stop saying stuff like that! If you know then just say it!”

“Fellania... when you look into the future, the future changes... because you looked at it. Such futures remain constant only so long as all factors remain constant, and only so long as certain Wild Cards don’t interfere. I never know the real future until it becomes the present.”

“Wild cards?” I asked, hearing something new. “What do you mean by Wild Cards when it comes to the future?”

“Fate Cheats.” Pen smirked. “He’s laced his deck with various individuals who, by either celestial design or by accident of birth, do not factor into any form of clairvoyance no matter how potent the wielder of that power is. Whatever it is about these individuals, whenever one looks into the future, the future plays out as if that person never existed, and such visions don’t account for what would happen if such a person were to interact with the individuals in whom the future regards. Butterfly effects, quantum theory and so on... any sort of interaction these individuals create can either do nothing... or they can offset the very power of the earth.”

“H-how common are such people?” I blinked in surprise at such a revelation.

“They are rare... exceedingly rare... maybe one in a billion, one in several billion perhaps. I personally know of four such people. One of them... resides in this shrine.” And he gestured with his staff.

“Here?! But... who?”

“I promise you... I watch this individual very carefully, Fellania. I can ensure you that this person would be the last person to interfere with Anho’s revival. Now if you’ll excuse me... I need to go change my bandages. I’ll meet you in three quarters of an hour in the sub basement.” And he hobbled off, still leaning on his staff from the wound that Remy’s grandfather had supposedly given him.

There had to be given respect for Pendragon to survive through not one but two blows of the wererat’s fabled venom. It was considered the second most venomous substance in the world, possibly the most venomous. Not exactly in regards to venoms per-se, but the number of viruses and diseases in a wererat’s special skill were enough to digest a bull elephant from the inside out within a matter of seconds. The fact that such a little guy like Pen could take such blows, straight to his heart even, denoted exactly how powerful and resilient this dragon was, especially when one accounts that Remy’s grandfather was renowned to have the Seven Deadly Venoms.

But likewise, it was a testament as to the potency of the poisons and diseases in a wererat’s bite. Even after Pen had suffered the blow from a knife coated in the saliva of a wererat more than a week ago, Pen still he hobbled favoring his side.

I watched him go before turning to watch the fishes eat the bread floating in the water, and with a long sigh, I dreamed of the future like a young woman might as she thought of her girlhood crush and the guy who most interested her, and I dreamed of places to live, things to do, the babies I’d have... and I did so for that whole three-quarters of an hour wait before I could go and see my Anho again.

Her name is Lilly Jade, and she was either a pure accident... or a design of fate.

The best way to describe her was as a sort of a she-hulk creature. She was granted phenomenal muscular might and power at will, might and power that only kept growing and growing... but might and power scared her. She hated those words, and absolutely refused to allow them to be used in reference to her. She adamantly stated she was not mighty, and she was not powerful. Instead... she asked to be referred to as skillful and able.

In her mind, possessing the ‘skill’ that ‘enabled’ her to do a thing didn’t make her mighty or powerful.

As such, where most other legends of hulks grow larger and stronger the angrier they get, Lilly grew gentler and more loving the bigger she got.

A sort of energy wells inside her, potent enough to tilt the whole world on its axis if she chose to, and she was strong enough to move mountains – literally – and considering that prowess, one should also consider that she uses every ounce, every mote, every nuance of that potency to give kindness, love and affection. The greater her strength became, the gentler she became.

It was like she was the definition of paradox.

So then, as I was hobbling along, trying to ignore the pain in my side, it was of little surprise that I felt hands under my arms before they lifted me into an embrace that involved me being smished into her voluminous bosom.

“Nee!” she mewed and rubbed her cheek against my head, embracing me like I was her favorite plushy, right before she began to purr rather loudly while I fit easily between her cleavage.

“Good morning Lilly.” I smirked, and with a gleeful sound in her throat as she began purring even louder, she gave me a lick with her tongue and its tongue comb combed my mane to one side before she walked with me automatically into the apothecary chamber, a room with a multitude of little drawers with herbs in them, where she took to tending to my wound, humming a random song that was delightfully in tune.

Her very presence just sucked hate and anguish from the room.

She was kitten-like, playful and loving, and try as one might, you just couldn’t look upon her in a sexual way... even despite her definite... assets.

She had incredible feminine potency... much like a few of the other females I could mention in my shrine... but unlike them, Lilly didn’t show off that potency... not even inadvertently. Teats didn’t show themselves through clothing she wore, and right now the yellow bikini beneath her opened Kimono was tasteful in its size to give an appropriate and non-scandalous level of coverage.

She covered her womanly gifts, and she was truly bashful when it came to showing off elements of her feminine form, even to a doctor. She still bathed alone instead of in the communal baths.

“All done!” she said and then lifting me up she embraced me again, rubbing her cheek affectionately against my head and folding me into her soft bosom.

I had to admit... I’d grown accustomed to her affections. Besides... it was a wonderful experience observing her.

With all the hurt and harm in the world, with all the negative energy that even the best-minded individuals of a world with a population of more than nine billion individuals create – humans made up only six-point-eight billion – Lilly Jade was nature’s way of counterbalancing all the hate, hurt and harm in the world.

The Book of Revelations spoke of that there would be wars and rumors of wars, and as such... I’d observed that the greater the atrocities became in the world, the greater the suffering, the more affectionate she got, and likewise the more affectionate she got the larger and the stronger she got.

She was a luminous being... as luminous as any Dragon was beneath their scales, but in her case her shell was made of the softest most silken flesh and fur imaginable. Muscles that should feel like bundles of piano wire were as soft as if they were fat instead.

Like I said... she was paradoxical.

In the short few months that she'd been in my care she'd increased in the measure of all the power in her by at least three fold. Oh she enjoyed her strength... a part of her remembers the wisp of a woman that she used to be, but never would she use that strength to so much as defend herself. To coin a phrase 'she wouldn't even hurt a fly'.

As if she needed to defend herself... I was certain she could take a direct hit from an ICBM if necessary.

"Are you going to treat that nice man in the basement mistah Pen-Pen, mew?" Lilly asked as she continued holding me like a plushy in her arms.

"Yes... but how did you know about Anhogamon?" I asked her.

She paused, eyes going distant, eyes that shone and glowed faintly in the dim light of the apothecary. "I can... feel him... dreaming. Miss Fellania is very concerned about him. Very, very concerned." She then began to carry me through the halls of the shrine, legs dangling beneath me while she carried my staff.

"So she is. Do you have any insight about the matter, Lilly?"

Lilly's mind was in the now... she didn't dwell on the past, didn't think about the future... her awareness and the potency of the abilities within her were all focused on the immediate, and because of that, when she acted it was also immediate... not down the road, not a half an hour from now... she acted... now.

But then... her presence and the way she acted toward me made me wonder. Why me? Why did she place so much attention on me? Was it thankfulness for coming to get her when she'd blossomed for the first time? Was it because I was still injured and fighting disease and poison in my body and this was just her being loving and kind? Or was it something deeper...?

Being a million and a half years old had a tendency to do things to a guy. Having lived for so long I understood seclusion and loneliness, and strangely... with her near... all that went away.

"Time for breakfast, Pen-Pen!" she said with much glee, carrying me off toward the kitchen where the smells of breakfast were wafting upward.

With a sigh, I simply laid back within her arms and bosom and gave myself over to the inevitable. Besides... how could a four foot tall guy like me complain about commonly finding himself within the ample bosom of an affectionate female?

I am Remy LeBeau. Yeah... I'm still hanging around.

Strangely enough, this is the longest I'd ever remembered 'hanging around' in one place for so long. Even as a child there was the necessity of moving... constantly moving. We could never stay in one place for long... only the elite held any authority in the Undercity, the stolen city of the Wererats. Only the Elite had property and things, living in the peaks of the vaulted towers of that dark city. The rest of us scurried along the ground levels, having to fight each other for supremacy, pitting brother versus brother and sister versus sister amidst a cut-throat game of survival.

I remember as a child finding a person who accidentally got into the Undercity... survival, for myself and our species, dictated that I rob the bastard blind and slit his throat. I robbed him blind all right, but he woke up in his underpants in a back alleyway with an empty bottle of Jack Daniels in his hand, hopefully thinking that all this was a massive drunken stupor.

No newspaper stories spoke of giant rats in the sewer; no strangers came visiting, no government agents attempted to delve in the city under the city under the city of New York. If there had been... chances were that I wouldn't have survived till today. Should our elders ever discover the nature of such mistakes, then the offender is executed for the mistake no matter their station. Even our kings, princes and princesses can be punished thus. No one was over that all-encompassing law.

Secrecy was our greatest stricture, and disobeying it was like committing treason. But... I just couldn't kill some drunk who wandered into a sewer and stumbled in on our home. It was that day that I discovered our second stricture... which was distraction.

I'd become among the best in my field because I became aware of those things. I had a zero percent failure rate, I stole everything I was meant to steal, executed everyone I was meant to execute... without fail. So when I got commissioned to be a guide for two other Lycan into an unknown place... simply because a dragon wished it, I hadn't expected the generosity of a dragon.

As a matter of course, most dragons I'd met were staunch misers. This Pendragon was very generous... exceedingly so, philanthropic even, especially for what he'd already given me.

So here I was, laying face down in my nest of blankets, warm and comfortable... two things I couldn't recall ever having at the same time in my life. It made me complacent. The mother of all fuckups was becoming complacent, so I took measures to make sure that my home was still safe, so regardless, I'd ensured that every nook and cranny was sealed, the doors were doubly barred and there were tripwires and traps set all across my room.

But that never kept my favorite guest from getting past them.

A jingling of bangles and jewelry were always the only things that gave her away, and then only when she wanted to be given away. This was only done when she was upon you, ready for you. She was silent and unheard, and the sort of person that most people wouldn't notice, or if they did notice her then they'd overlook her. It's what made females potentially more potent assassins than males.

They were so often overlooked.

Sen was a sheathed dagger honed to a razor's edge in a bejeweled hilt hidden amidst thick and heavy robes. She was a rare creature, especially among rats, and Pen just... gave her to me. Trained from a young age, it seemed as if she was prepared specifically for me, for my wants and desires in mind. Her affections had been uncomfortable at first... I wasn't used to affections like this... they felt... genuine. I was used to being played upon for some greater purpose. She wanted money, she wanted food or clothes, she wanted sex...

Sen's affections were the first that I'd ever had where I couldn't see some ulterior motive in. She pleased me because she wanted to... and nothing more.

Even now as I laid there in the nest, she lightly pulled the blankets back to reveal my backside and great thick pink tail that she loves so much, and as she crawled up onto the bed, she dragged her sex along that long, pink tail, humping its base briefly as she pulled the blankets up over her shoulders, and then she laid against my back and

embraced me from behind. I reveled in the press of her dual set of breasts against my shoulders and the back of my neck as she laid repeated kisses upon me while still humping that tail. It wasn't long before she intertwined her tail with mine.

"It's time for you to get up." She sighed into my ear, nibbling on it.

"I got a better idea... how bout you stay here with me." I murred and twisted myself to look at her from over my shoulder. "Sleep in... relax. You're supposed to be watching over me after all."

"That I am... in every respect. This includes getting you out of bed so you don't waste away and become fat and lazy." She mentioned and then straddled me as I rolled onto my back and she immediately arched herself deeply, jutting her chest outward into the air and squeezing each pair of her breasts for me while I took hold of her wide hips. "And besides... if you stay in bed all day... then you'll stink like you got washed up by the run off... and a sewer rat is unbecoming of you."

"Oh is it... and what is becoming of me? A street rat, a lab rat..."

"How about a jumbo albino rat?" she murred, and with a deft wobble and a wiggle she caught my erecting tip in her loins and slid down onto it while fingering that shaft with her long-nailed fingertips. "With a pink tail!"

For a fem that had been a virgin before she pierced herself on me... she was amazingly deft at lovemaking... her loins just the right amount of clench and give, and she had the expert abdominal control of a belly dancer who studied Yoga to give me the semblance of a hand job whenever I sexed... I mean made love to... her.

And with her loins conveniently coupled with mine, she giggled and dipped, kissing my chest and dragging her chests against my body while I held onto her behind.

That behind was wide, firm and rounded, apt for baring children with little pain or hurt, her body firm and athletic with just the right amount of musculature creasing her form. She had the arms of an apple picker, the belly of a belly dancer, the legs of a dancer, the hips of a mother and the grace of an artisan... she was prepped to be everything I wanted. When she was born, Pen rescued her from whatever situation she'd been in, brought her up apart from our culture, tempered her to be as elegant as she was dangerous, had her instructed in the most profound of sexual arts, and then when I arrived, he prettied her up and had her... attend to me.

He must've been working on her for the better part of two decades or more.... Just to give her... give her... to me.

I kept telling myself that he'd worked some sort of spell on her, that she was a lure, a piece of cheese in the world's greatest rat trap, and at any moment, a great big snapping bar was going to come down and break my neck. But as a thief, I was trained to recognize fakes, recognize falsehoods, and either the trap was so well made, or somehow, for some reason, everything that I ever desired in a woman, even the situation, was being realized in her...

Perhaps that was the trap. Perhaps I'd already been caught and didn't know it and was just struggling against the inevitable. I was actually considering words like family and children and I thought to myself that I must be mad! There was no way it was possible... no way...

But... my father had done it, somehow had found a female to father me with. And if my old man could do it with my mum, have a semblance of a normal life, then I'd beat that bastard yet! I would actually have a normal life and not just a semblance of one. And what was more was that I was certain to outlive that fucker for sure.

And this fem, this lure to the trap... was the key to it all.

Sen... you are the lure to my trap and the key to my escape.

...

I reminded myself then t never underestimate the conniving ability of a dragon...

Madoushi's fingers were cradling and loving.

We'd finished our morning lovemaking, had bathed together and made love in the waters. Dried and made love again so we had to bathe a second time... which we simply moved the lovemaking back into the magically heated and cleaned waters of the pool here. After drying off a second time and managing to get dressed this time, me in the matriarchal robes Pen had given me, robes that were cut high on the hips, low on the belly and high on the ribs to show off my tummy, to display that I was pregnant to all in the shrine and so offered additional help whenever needed, Madoushi had dressed in a loose gentleman's Gi consisting of flowing black silk pants and a voluminous white linen wrap-around shirt.

"The clothing is odd here." Mady mentioned as he tugged at parts of the clothes he was wearing.

I chuckled and moved up to him, pressing my body against his, my breasts flattening against his chest, my thighs and pelvis cupping his groin while I palmed his chest. "What would you prefer then? A butler's suit or a loincloth?"

"I don't know if I should answer that."

"Oh... and why not?" I smirked at him and fussed at straightening his collar.

"Well, I've been wearing a butler suit – the same suit mind you – for over three hundred years. I'm really not keen on getting inside one again. And I don't know if I should put on a loin cloth or not. It'd just give us more reason to make love again."

"And is that such a bad thing?" I fake pouted.

"Not as much... but we do need to eat from time to time."

I smirked and hefted my breasts in either hand. "Got that handled right here." I smirked and Mady immediately embraced me, and I turned amidst his caressing and possessive hands about me.

Almost immediately he went to cradling my belly while nibbling love-bites on my neck along with sweet kisses, licking my skin while he massaged my muscled belly. I noted that his hands kept getting lower and lower till he was actually rubbing the labial muscles through the white linen thong I wore.

"We're going to be late for breakfast." I giggled as we managed to get to the door, but not before he got a hand into those panties and had started to probe my pocket, getting me to bite my lower lip and sigh nasally as I churned in his supporting arm.

“I can’t help it. I’ve been without feminine companionship for three hundred years, and now that I have a mate, with a cub on the way, I can’t get passed how strong you are yet how soft you are. Nom!” *and he began sucking on my neck.*

Man I was going to get a hickie... good thing that we Lycan heal such things almost instantly.

“Strong am I?” *I murred and lifted an arm, coiling it, making the heaving Olympic-sized bicep swell from that arm, and tensing it harder in a flex, the crackelature of veins popped out and stood on end, and he immediately cradled the arm now and kissed the massive bicep as it swelled and swelled and kept swelling several times its previous size.*

Not even Fell’s muscles did that... expanded as they flexed to those proportions. I was still pretty sure she was stronger than me though... she was a plough horse that I just couldn’t keep up with.

It was a man-sized arm on this woman’s body... possibly even larger than man-sized. I was a supernatural creature of power! And my muscles displayed just such a thing. Madoushi moved and his kisses lowered to the bridge of the shoulder, over the shoulder and onto that bicep again and again as he kissed and licked the long and thickened bicep vein that throbbed excitedly in tune with my heart. The veins in my forearm knotted, and I laughed and cooed even as his other hand slid from my sex to my belly and then onward to my breasts, lifting that hand just long enough to coil that impressively long tongue of his around it to lick my juices off before that hand descended my body again.

Eventually I felt his fingers starting to slip in through the leg-hole of those panties of mine to caress my labia and perhaps eventually finger me again by the time I opened the door.

And suddenly there was a cacophony of noise, of hammering and sawing and sanding and planning.

“All right you bunch of louts, boss says that we need to sand this hallway! Get to sanding you slack jawed jerks!” *A small lizard-like thing with four arms, a long tail and an oversized hard hat was yelling at a crew of dozens if not hundreds of similarly shaped creatures but of varying genders and coloring.*

The one shouting lifted a mug of coffee that was about the size he was when we slid out into the hall with confusion, finding that every plane in the hall had been sanded smooth. Floor, walls, ceiling, picture frames... everything... leaving only pictures and furniture alone.

“Whoa! Hot mama! Hubba-hubba-hubba!” *the leader said pushing up his hard hat that seemed to be wobbling idly around on a pair of antennae.*

“Milf! Eh-heh... milf! Milf!” *another of the lizards said, obviously male.*

“Ah... hi.” *I managed, wide-eyed and surprised at this debacle as Mady’s arms embraced me possessively, even protectively.*

“Hi-hi-hi... HI!” *the lot of them greeted in an echoing wave as they all waved before getting back to work.*

“What’s going on here?” *Madoushi mentioned.* “This is madness!”

There was a zipping sound, and one of the creatures, a black one but dressed like Groucho Marx with a cigar appeared. “I’ll tell you about madness. Madness is a rat a cat and a dog in a burlap sack thrown into the river. You’d be lucky if there was anything left.” *And he zipped away again to goodness knows where.*

And from nowhere one of the little butterfly-winged lizards slapped her whole body against Mady's face. "No... what's madness is that I've never made the acquaintance ya big hunk-a-hunk-a-burnin'-love! Ooo... come make me a woman and..."

And another little lizard arrived with a crowbar and pried the female off Mady's face before hauling her off by her wings, walking through the air and dragging her along by her tail over his shoulder.

"No wait! I must have you my love! Take me! Oh!"

"I feel strangely violated." *Mad mentioned.*

"We do that." *The one with the hard hat said.* "Just be glad that the face hugger wasn't a guy. Hi! Name's Mxyzptlk."

I blinked. "Wait... isn't that..."

"The name of a Superman villain... yes. Mom and dad started running out of names after about twenty of us or so... so they started naming us after candy bars, comic book characters... sexually transmitted diseases."

"Yeah... imagine my wonder when I grew old enough to understand what Chlamydia meant." *One lone pink female said as she dragged a satchel filled with tools along the ground as she passed.*

"...Right. Anyways... we are the brood! And we're here to stay..."

Another little butterfly-winged lizard hopped in and did a riff on a miniature guitar and threw the horns up into the air and head-banged. "And we're here to party every day-ya!" *he screamed before leaping away.*

"That was Lars." *Myx said staring at us as we stared back and another of the little lizards hopped up onto the cupboard that Myx was on.*

"Ever have that uncomfortable silence... where you just stare at each other, hoping the other person has something else to say." *This one said while grinning stupidly and wiggling his fingers close to his face for emphasis.*

Myx back-handed him. "Get back to work!" *he shouted at everyone and the hammering and sanding and sawing continued.*

"Brood... what brood?" *Mad asked.*

"We are the brood of Ba'ab and Pun't'ang!" *he bowed deeply as the helmet on his head wobbled dangerously.* "We're... ah... going to be staying here for awhile."

"A long while!" *some random person said and Myx reached behind himself as if pulling something from a back pocket and lobbing it at the speaker who turned in a full circle from the blow and then collapsed to the ground with a laugh.*

"Anyways... we're trading... ew... work, for a place to stay." *And then there was the sound of a power drill.* "Excuse me a second." *And he flew off quickly to smack one of his brood-mates.* "Dad said no power tools! Here... here's a hand crank one... use that."

“Are you destroying Master Pendragon’s home?” *I asked as Myx returned.*

“Depends upon your definition of ‘destroy.’” *He grinned and flew upward with a fluttering of wings to the top of the cabinet. “But no... we are sanding the hallway... just like he told us to.”*

“Probably will get us to wax it later!” *some other random broodling called.*

“Wax on. Wax off. Wax on... wax off. Lookit me, I’m Ralph Macchio again!” *yet another cried.*

“Perhaps what we’re doing was a bit too literal...” *one of the other lizards, who was wearing a pair of children’s glasses that were taped to his head and wore a back pack filled with pens and pencils and a ruler said from behind some blue prints. Until now I thought it was just a page of paper lying on the ground.*

“Of course not... he told us to sand the hallway so we’re sanding it. Make sure you get everything nice and smooth!”

“And why aren’t you working mister big mouth?!” *a girl lizard called from a rafter.*

“Because dad put me in charge... that means I get to stand around and shout at people while drinking coffee. Oh wait... I forgot something...” *and suddenly he exhaled and his belly distended so he looked nice and fat before he seemed to push down a layer of skin to show off butt crack. He then promptly placed a fat cigar in his mouth.*

“I’m telling mom you’re smoking!”

“You better believe it sister.” *Myx waggled his eyebrows. “Smoking hot!”*

“Sa-mokin’!” *another broodling with big teeth said. He just so happened to be green with big teeth as well.*

“But what are you all?” *Mad reflected then.*

“We...” *Myx managed, drawing himself up on tip toe and then raising even higher onto tail tip. “...Are Fairy Dragons. Yeah... that’s us.” And he pointed at himself with the index fingers of all four arms and the big toes of both feet.*

“Fairy dragons... should you be drinking coffee?” *I blanched.*

“Hey... it’s only a triple espresso chocolate mocha...” *and he sipped at it coming back with a thick brown moustache and beard of foam. “Hmmm... that’s good cream.”*

“I squeeze it myself!” *another of the lizards – dragons – said from down the hall, saying it with a lisp and an effeminate wave of a hand, and Myx looked into the cup, smacking his lips before taking another sip. “EW!” many little voices squeaked.*

“Pecans with a pleasant crunch.” *Myx mentioned with an extended pinkie and licked the moustache off with an abnormally long tongue. “But if you will... please move along you humina-humina-humina hottie. This is a professional work zone.” And he raised an index finger to make a point of that right as another dragon cried “Bonzai!” and bungee jumped off the rafters.*

“Ah... nice to meet you Myx.” *I mentioned and Mady and I quickly left that hallway and headed downstairs to the main hall, me holding onto his arm as the little Fairy Dragons started sanding the stairs behind us.*

“For a moment there, I thought I was in the Dreamtime...” *Mady mentioned shaking his head.*

“How was that like being in the Dreamtime?” *I blinked.*

“How chaotic are dreams?” *he asked me and I nodded.*

“Oh... right. Pen’s going to be mad I think.” *I mentioned looking back as they little dragons swept up the saw dust and made a snowman out of it... well... a sand man while that Lars guy played ‘Enter the Sandman’. They worked at a maddening pace... like squirrels on too much caffeine.*

“Yeah... but I’m beginning to get the idea that those little guys are a tad too literal. It may’ve been Pen’s mistake.” *Mad mentioned as we entered the dining hall, a double row of low lying tables with cushions all around, and at their head with a third table was Pen and the masters of the shrine.*

Pen was of course at the head table, with the lovely young Lilly Jade totally spoiling him, blowing on some eggs before feeding them to him. I had to snerk at seeing him in a bib.

Mad and I made for a place along one of the side tables, the cooks in the center making whatever the individuals along the edge might want, these individuals dressed in colorful cloaks, shorts and head bands and were serving everything from steak and eggs to fish and sake. There was a bowl of Sweet Bread – a Chinese/Mongolian treat that consisted of a sesame/sugar mixture folded inside a doughy bread – on the table. Just like whenever anything sweet came by me, I got a sudden and absolute craving for it, and so two fistfuls of the treats.

“Methinks that our daughter has a bit of a sweet tooth... or am I wrong and my new bride is the one with the sweet tooth.”

“No... craving. Nom!” *I said happily with half a mouthful of sweet bread.*

But as we moved to our places, suddenly a person at the tables rose from his seat to tower over us.

When I saw that it was Lee, I instinctively hugged Mad’s arm closer to me, close enough where his arm threaded right between my boobs. Mady then stepped in front of me and faced the towering tiger with all his comparatively diminutive form.

‘I’ve died more than eighteen thousand two hundred and fifty times,’ *Mady had told Lee shortly after we’d escaped Lea Monde. ‘I’ve fought Wolfmen, Denizens and Vampires, and I have more power in my pinkie than you have strength in your whole body. You harm her, or seek to harm her... and I swear to the Maker I’ll break you in half.’*

They were profound words for my new love and mate, and I was profoundly proud of him that day, but now that we stood here again...

It was a terse moment, and the noise in the room slowly quieted to a deadpan silence while Mad and Lee stared at each other, the rivalry more than apparent even to the casual observer. Lee flexed the fingers of one hand.

“You’re in my way.” *Lee mentioned in a low growl as he stepped toe to toe with Mady, the Asian shape of his human body seeming more Mongolian or similar than Chinese.*

“You stepped into our way. So it’s your place to move out of ours.” *Madoushi replied sternly, setting his jaw.*

“Make me, little man.” *Lee replied and lifted his hands and adjusted the collar of Mad’s Gi, but slowly I saw his fingers knotting the fabric, his jaw setting, and I felt the hackles on the back of my neck rise as I sensed a fight coming... it was a mere fraction of a second from happening when...*

“Lee...” *Pendragon mentioned. Apparently Lilly Jade had snatched him up into her arms to protect him from the oncoming violence, and she was trembling, afraid of what was about to happen. “...You’re in the wrong in this situation.”*

The warning in Pen’s voice was unmistakable. Though Lee might not have cause to fear Mady... he had more than enough to fear Pen. I almost hoped for the fight to happen, then Mady could stuff Lee into a hole and put him out of our lives for good. My stomach cramped and I cradled it, rubbing my belly to calm my daughter.

But despite Pen’s warning tone, Lee looked like he was about to ignore Pen’s word, and I saw Falcor uncoiling from across the room, and with a jerk of the wrists, Falcor freed his hands and a memory of that deadly Eagle Claw technique Falcor was so well known for appeared in Lee’s eyes. But then Lee, with a look of utmost determination, unlaced his fingers from Mad’s Gi and stepped out of the way, head hanging.

“My... apologies.” *He said in a low growl, looking dark as he glowered at Mady from beneath the bangs of his mane.*

“You are excused, Lee. Thank you for seeing the issue and resolving it civilly.” *Pen said quietly. It was calculated words of dismissal that left Lee no room to refuse them*

“Yes... Master Pendragon.” *And he soon slunk out of the room, leaving Mad and I to sit far from where he was sitting.*

“Oh... why won’t he just go away?” *Lilly mentioned. “Every time Mister Madoushi and Mister Lee get in the same room, I feel like the air is going to explode.”*

“It’s a delicate situation, Lilly. He wants to know if the child Susan carries in her is his or not. I am not one to deny a potential father knowledge of his children lest he proves himself to be too much of a detriment to this shrine’s peace. Hopefully no one ever tests that nerve in me.” *And as Lilly carried Pen along as Pen said those last words he glanced at us briefly, or perhaps directly at Mady, a pleading glance to not follow his own baser instincts and fight Lee, before Lilly carried him away.*

I kept looking after them till I felt Mady’s hand slide against my belly.

“Are you ok?” *he asked.*

“I’m ok... it’s my heart that aches over all this, not my womb.” *I said and rubbed my tummy briefly before gripping his hand. “But nevertheless, I think that last part was meant for us as well as Lee. Pen is a gracious host, but he’s right... this is a place of peace. We... should just avoid Lee till the baby is born. Then he can see that our daughter isn’t his for his very own eyes and then just... go the hell away.*

“At this point I don’t think I can ever forgive him. I thought... he loved me.”

“His loss.” *Mad said and scooted closer to me.* “But I certainly do love you. I love everything about you... and I’ll be a father to your daughter... even if it isn’t mine.”

“I love you too.” *I smiled and then sighed.* “I’m kinda not hungry now, but then I kinda am. This stuff with Lee has me bummed... but I’ve developed such an appetite lately!”

“Master Pendragon says that you may have as much as you want till you’re filled.” *The cook for the table said.*

“Heh... even Pen is trying to get me fat. Ok... small steak and eggs... medium rare and scrambled!”

I am Fellania...

Walking down the stairs after breakfast, past the cellar, past the vault, deep underground where the earth was quiet and still but the power of the mountain still held firm, I approached Anho’s door only to find several little fairy dragons crawling around the bulbous and sealed lock. I grew concerned as I saw one with a gem in his forehead shining like a flashlight while they were trying to pry the lock open with a lever.

“Come on! Before somebody shows up! Pendragon must have something priceless in here that we can take and sell to the goblins and...”

I clenched my jaw. They were messing with my man, and immediately these little buggers were showing themselves to be the sorts that I didn’t like. Thieves and trouble makers.

My hand lifted and within it a yellow-white ball of fierce light flared to life that shone through the whole of the stone hall, appropriately illuminating the scowl on my face. I was a fierce woman when I need to be... and when I scowled I was often told that I looked... scary.

“Eek!” one of the fairy dragons squealed like a little girl... especially when they saw the stone-cold look on my face... like a face of chiseled granite looking darkly down on them.

“We were just... ah...” and the lever that was many times their size disappeared somehow behind their backs. “...We were just exploring! Yeah... that’s it.” the one with the lever grinned widely.

“Or treasure hunting.” I corrected and his grin faded, and then his jaw dropped as I transformed right before his eyes, the loose fitting robes tightening about me like second skins, my bosom surging forward and becoming the breasts of the earth mother, like the breasts of Gaia, the pair straining into the chest wrap therein while even the sleeves of the robes I wore became tight around my heaving arms. I had to stoop slightly due to my height as I strode forward by several steps to look down at the four cowering fairy dragons, my eyes darting over them.

“Now that I have your color patterns, I suggest the lot of you leave and never come back down here. And you should know that this door isn’t from keeping you from getting in, but what’s in it from getting out, and I’m its guardian. Just think... what sort of monster is on the other side of this door that would need me to keep it in?” I grinned at them, showing all my overlapping and rather sharp teeth. My grin was more frightening than my scowl was. “So lest you want to know what it feels like having your entrails sucked out through your nose...”

“Yes ma’am. So sorry ma’am.” And they flittered off, their bodies giving off subtly glowing lights that were visible here in the darkness as they fled.

Exhaling a brief breath through my nostrils, I stood and waited, till I heard the inevitable click-click-click of Pen walking his staff.

“And how are we today, Fellania?”

“Some of your little *guests* were just trying to get into Anho’s room.” I mentioned.

“As I thought they might... so I warded it with my best lores to keep them from getting in. I was young and mischievous too.” He winked and gestured, and I heard the multitude of clicking as the three dimensional lock realigned its multitude of pieces, spinning and turning like the box in that Hellraiser movie perhaps inside the sealed lock before the wall itself parted before us, allowing for some light to flood into the hall.

I felt my breath pause and my heart skip a beat or two as I looked more clearly upon Anhogamon. Not being able to help myself, I strode straight to the melting ice and slid my hands against it, caressing the areas of his face and chest, feeling each breath come harder as I swallowed a choking sensation on my throat.

The yearning in my chest and loins became unbearable, but I withheld myself.

“There’s... so much more of him.” I trembled... actually trembled, and stopping my light spell I wrung my fingers together nervously.

Pen entered behind me and the doors slid silently shut again while I stood there looking upon and pawing at the noble Anhogamon’s frozen form, a diminutive bobcat-man that was nearly as ancient as the human race was.

His muscles were rosy, his thighs thick, his arms taut with skilled muscle. Whatever series of events that eventually led him to this moment I might never know, but regardless, I squatted before him breathing deeply, seeing my breath chill and come out as smoke whenever I got too close to the remnants of his ice block. My throat bobbed and I swallowed deeply against the choking ache again, suppressing a nasal moan as I felt my loins churn strangely and moisten in preparation for a coupling.

Even his very presence this close to me made me ready for love... made my loins receptive, and to cover the body change I promptly knelt and pressed both thighs together. Those loins of mine ached for want of him in me before I shook my head and palmed its forehead with one mighty clawed hand.

“Headache?” Pen asked bemusingly as he unrolled a satchel and began removing vials and tubes and needles.

“Among other things.” I mentioned and then stood; steeling myself and taking several very deliberate steps away from Anhogamon.

I had to distance myself... being close to him now enhanced the sickness, stepping away at least lessened it a bit, but then that stretching band feeling I felt this morning returned and started to twist faster with this close proximity to him.

But then he just looked so handsome! So virile. And then there was the box...

My memories remembered the box. He was never without it. It was his mission in his lifetime, and whatever that mission was I knew not, he hadn’t even told my first mother what it was. Nevertheless, he’d needed to complete that mission at all costs... even to the point of...

I pressed my palm against my forehead and tried to remember it, but when the memory came, a wash of loneliness followed right along behind it.

... even to the point of abandoning his new mate and newborn daughter to complete it.

Immediately I came to hate that box.

But looking back to Anhogamon, I wondered to myself why I was so... *fascinated* with this man. Sure he was ancient... sure he was my first mother's first and only love, and apparently there was enough of her in me where there was an... I don't know, and infatuation? I mean... he was handsome... and well built... and... and hung... and...

"Careful, Fellania... you're about to start drooling." Pen smirked over his shoulder and I checked my mouth quickly with a thumb, and then glared at him.

"Get out of my head!" I growled.

"I'm not in your head." He chuckled and I exhaled the stern annoyance that was in me as I watched him drill through the ice surprisingly quickly using a heated piece of metal.

"So it's that obvious then?" I asked.

"Fellania... I know you're typically a stalwart woman... strong and independent who never shows signs of weakness, but there are moments when you think no one is watching and you think about him," he tapped the ice with a little claw tip. "And you transform immediately into what I'd normally see on a love-sick teenager."

I fidgeted.

"There is no such thing as Reincarnation?" I asked him, not for the first time, probably not for the last time.

"Absolutely no such thing. I know such a statement might upset some individuals from India, in particular those of a Hindu faith, but having observed transcendence and the passage of a soul, having observed life and death across the multitudes of the world, I can assure you that there is no such thing as reincarnation. A soul can do only two things, Fellania... and that's move on... or haunt."

I stared at his back as he removed the heated drill, and now began to use needles with rubber hoses and bladders to start a transfusion of a fluid that he placed in mid air upside down and it hung there unsupported. I continued staring at his back, with those pretty multi-colored and faceted wings his... dragon wings but with crystalline slats like a dragonflies... only many thousands of times stronger.

"Pen... I've come to know you too well Pen... you're leaving something out there..." I mentioned suspiciously.

Pendragon was silent for a moment as he observed the cycle of whatever subtly glowing blue substance he was injecting slowly into Anhogamon was, squeezing a bladder to increase the speed of the infusion.

"Imagine that by their very design that every law of nature is to have loop holes. Including death. Take John the Beloved, one of Christ's apostles. He wanted to walk the earth until Christ came again. Met the guy... and John the

Beloved is indeed a most apropos title for this most holy of men. Dressed in a T-shirt and jeans at the time, but he really cared for... well... everyone.

“But then imagine Pilot’s gate keeper. A different man, he who struck Christ and was so cursed to walk the earth until the End of Days. Never before have I met a more repentant soul in my whole life.”

“That’s immortality though. You’re an immortal, aren’t you?” I asked.

“Not in the strictest sense of the word, but yes. Your first mother, seeing her own death approaching, sought to naturally extend it so that she could wait longer. Her fur had turned white and still she was as strong as she ever was. Her child and grand children and great grand children had all died long before her... shell... simply couldn’t sustain itself any longer... not even with the ageless power of Mount Fuji sustaining her.

“So then it fell to White Oak.”

“White Oak? What does it have to do with anything?”

Pen turned to look at me with those wide and enlarged green eyes of his. “In the moment of her death, a part of her... call it her essence... was held within White Oak’s heartwood, and preserved these many hundreds of millennia... till such a time when happenstance and serendipity allowed for a nearly perfect vessel – and by nearly perfect, I mean for a woman that was very nearly exactly like your first mother – appeared, and then the measures of fate could be pulled to end the endless waiting.

“At the same time, another mote passed from mother to daughter for countless generations, till it nestled in you.

“Aside from your own curiosity... there is a mote, a fraction of your first mother, nestled inside you long before White Oak came into your possession. When the two motes met, they formed a sort of catalyst and unfolded within you.”

“So... I’m becoming my first mother?” I asked, wringing my hands again.

“No. And yes. It’s difficult to explain without a recourse of your family history and an explanation of transcendental metaphysical spiritualism. In essence... you are you... modified by your first mother’s experiences. There is enough of her in you, where she’s there along for the ride. You will feel a yearning, true... I can imagine it must be pretty powerful to have such a mature woman’s yearnings in such a young body as yours, but ultimately whatever choice you make is your own to make. You control the body... she merely augments you with her power, strengths and experiences.” He paused and returned to his work. “The best way that I can explain this loophole of death is by using the second type of loophole I explained earlier.”

“Haunt? My first mother is haunting me?” I asked him.

“That is a most basic definition of the term, but yes, but haunts have choices... if aided properly. A soul can be broken, a soul can be merged with another soul, a soul can be consumed and burned, but ultimately, a soul is immortal, unceasing and even if broken...” he looked at me directly. “The pieces will always eventually seek to come back together.”

“Skipping through time.” I said aloud and palmed my heart.

“There are philosophies that allow for a soul to die... but the soul must choose to die... disincorporate as it were. Your first mother needed to wait longer, and since she couldn't do it as she was, she wagered that though haunting, she could acquire the time needed to wait.

“She allowed her soul to be broken, journeyed firstly in White Oak and secondly through your bloodline to the here and now. The two pieces made twain, are now one.

“It's appropriate that Madoushi is in the shrine. His people would call what your first mother has done a sort of spiritual *'walkabout'*. In you the pieces of become one again, and the two pieces conversed, told each other what they learned, and are now journeying together again... inside you. All is well again, and though you are not your first mother, you are made greater because of her.

“The only element of contention, I think, is that this is the real and original Anhogamon.”

“Why is that an element of contention?” I blinked.

“For several reasons. The most poignant to you is that you're broken in how you are to feel about him. The other problem is that I'm sure he'll mistake you for your first mother.”

“How is that going to be an issue?” I asked. “I... sorta want that.”

“Perhaps I should remind you that Anhogamon and the original Fellania were romantically engaged. They produced a daughter together. He may expect to start upon that sort of a relationship again Fellania.”

I felt a pang in my heart suddenly. “Point taken.” I wasn't sure at the moment if I wanted that or not, and looked onto the ropy body of this Ronin bobcat.

“How did my first mother and him have a daughter anyways?” I asked. “I thought different weres can't have children together.”

“Different Weres, no... different Spirit Folk, yes. Three hundred thousand years is a lot of time for a species to evolve, Fellania. Fifty thousand years ago was close enough for wolves and cats to mate and produce young, but of course those were the Dire Wolf and the Smilidon at the time. And take Susan's man Madoushi. The Thylacine is called the Tasmanian Wolf and the Tasmanian Tiger depending upon who you ask. They're the Lycanthropes version of the *'missing link.'* Somewhere in their ancestry there was a cat and a wolf that bred, and it produced them. How great their breed was when it was new, but in time they became smaller, thinner, and a sort of wild magic just sort of blossomed in them.

“The Dreamtime.” I mused and Pen nodded.

“It's a shame that the bulk of their clan was destroyed by warring wolves and lions. As such... I can only assume that Anhogamon will be protean enough that, despite that he is a bobcat... is that he can still impregnate you.”

I went for my navel with both hands, and felt a sudden emptiness inside me that yearned to be filled, my heat suddenly striking me more intensely, fueled on by my damnable emotions. I had to admit... secretly I was jealous of Sue for being pregnant before me. I was older, nearly a decade older, and I'd been wanting a baby too... a soft... fluffy little girl that I could cradle and nurse and...

I shook my head to clear it and sighed, both hands collapsing into my lap before I looked up to this venerable lycanthrope... I mean Spirit Folk that was Anhogamon. Though it might be the ice distorting the image, and likewise that damn box was in the way, but he looked like he could tickle the back of my throat should he penetrate me with that manhood of his...

“How long will this take?” I asked again, another question that wasn’t the first and probably wouldn’t be the last that I’d ask him.

“His blood is like molten ice, Fellania. It moves through him at about the speed that a glacier slides down from the mountains into its melt pool, but he is slowly waking up as his body warms up and his blood pumps faster the warmer he becomes. I can imagine that this tonic won’t be fully absorbed by his body till tomorrow morning. It’ll help thaw him, and help prevent those issues I discussed with you earlier.”

“That whole turning to dust as the air ages you thing?” I asked and Pen nodded.

“And the fact that the spiritual pressure of billions is a hell of a lot more than the millions as were present in his day and age. That and the forced evolution of his kind can send him into shock and kill him as his body tries to deal with such a racial change like that. The effect of the moon is a lot more poignant on Lycan than it was on Spirit Folk, so I need to... shall we say... *evolve* him subtly while he’s still encased in ice.” Pen paused and turned to me, his beautiful multi-colored and multi-petaled wings waving behind him as he did. “He will have to cope with a lot Fellania. I’m sure you understand this.”

I nodded. “How does a man go from buildings no more than a few stories tall to more than a hundred stories tall? Madoushi was amazed and shocked at the changes of the world in only three hundred years, so I can only imagine what my Anho...” I paused, realizing that I called him ‘*My Anho*,’ but Pen merely slow blinked at me, his enlarged, ancient eyes not betraying any hint that he’d noticed. But he did... he just wasn’t saying anything about it. “... My Anho will be even more shocked at what he sees in this world. Airplanes, clocks, computers, skyscrapers, ocean liners the size of a floating city...”

“Only a human could manage to make their world larger than it really is, Fellania.” Pen smirked, and then turned his attention back to the infusion.

I sat there quietly, watching him work, watching the ice glisten with melt and run off, listening to the drip-drip-drip of the water splashing against the ground from the ice. Suddenly I had to pee, but I didn’t leave.

I wanted to stay there as long as I could...

Never before in my life had I ever felt so excited in watching ice melt.

I am Sue.

I have to mention... spending my days in relative comfort like this, a peaceful shrine filled with people who were privy to my every need with a personal guardian in the form of a powerful magician like Madoushi – the ‘Demon Sorcerer’ as he was known as in the town of Dead Wood – was a good way to finally have a vacation. Vacation from scroll hunting, vacation from Corrupted Greatest Elementals, vacation from Wolfmen and Vampires after having delved through my first change, passed through Wormwood, Stolen from the Vatican – excuse me, recovered from the Vatican – and later Lea Monde, all that stress had been wearing me down.

Alteration of a presence of self and constant conflict tends to wear on one soul, and then there was all this BS with Lee and...

...I needed a vacation...

So here I was, sitting next to my lover underneath a blossoming cherry tree while we made out, he playing with one of my tits beneath the robe I wore and two of our hands clasped over my belly... yeah... I felt warm, loved, comforted and safe. Everything any cat might want.

It was at that moment as I was flipping my leg around to straddle the bench before sliding up onto his lap, preparing for a little secretive lovemaking right there in the garden that I heard the disturbance.

“Ow! Leggo! Ow! Ow! Ow!”

Annoyed at the disturbance that dragged me away from that moment, my annoyance immediately turned into humor as I saw Ivan trotting up to us with a Fairy Dragon caught in his mouth. And that Fairy Dragon was not happy.

Ivan then dropped the dragon and before he could escape Ivan began rolling on him. “Ah! I am not a mouse!”

I giggled. I couldn't help not to while Mad chuckled at the sight.

“You've caught quite a prize there haven't you Ivan?” I asked.

“Stupid cat! Leggo!” the dragon raged and tried to kick and punch his way out from under the large feline.

“A word to the wise little morsel,” Ivan said with his heavy Russian Accent. “So long as you serve a purpose... I won't eat you.”

“Cripes! It talks!”

“He talks.” I chuckled. “Ivan... what are you doing?”

“I can't... help myself. I see these little things flitting about and so I must catch one! So I catch one and now I just want to show it to you and rub myself all over it. I don't know why. It's one of those... cat... things. Dogs roll in garbage, cat's roll in their kill and show it to their people. Now I'm contemplating on munching this little morsel and sharing it with Mew.”

“Ah! Cannibal! I'll show you!” The fairy dragon squealed and then tried wiggling his fingers. “Ah! I can't effect the cat! Why can't I effect the cat?!”

“I know not, Tovarichka... but...” and Ivan rubbed himself all over the dragon. “Obviously you are my prey.”

“Ah! Dad! Da-day!! Help me Da-day!!”

There was a zipping sound and suddenly a larger fairy blue Fairy Dragon was there before us, tapping a foot with two arms folded and the other two resting their fists on his hips while his face was set in one of utter annoyance.

“Why for you molesting my wittle daughter?” this larger fairy dragon who was named Bob mentioned.

Ivan, who had the little squirming dragon under the claws of one paw looked upside down at the newcomer.

“Ah... I was playing with him?” Ivan grinned and Bob slowly shook his head.

“If there is molesting and violating to do... that is...my job.” And he jerked a thumb at himself, his antennae lifting angrily. “Now let her go!”

“Da! Da! Letting her go.” And Ivan lifted his paw and rose as the little dragon scurried behind the feet and tail of Bob.

“He did fowl things and touched me in bad places da-day!” the little draca squealed.

“Oh he did, did he?” the new comer mused.

“Um... he’s sorry!” I mentioned immediately, and all eyes swiveled up to me. “He was just being a cat. It’s his nature...”

“Uh-huh...” Bob mentioned. “Well first of all, let me formally introduce myself to you.” And he bowed deeply. “My name’s Ba’ab... but you can call me Bob.” He offered a hand and he shook my outstretched finger. “But it’s his nature hm? Just being a cat?”

“Yeah?” I managed and Bob nodded sagely. “Then it’s human nature to war with each other and they should just be excused?”

“Ah...” I managed, exchanging looks with Madoushi.

“Well since we’re talking about natures... then understand that this is my nature, and you should just excuse it.”

And with another zipping motion, Bob snapped behind Ivan and jerked upward on his tail before wadding him up into a ball, a perfect spherical shape mind you, before compressing Ivan down into a small ball with dimples on it. Then producing a golf tee and a club, Bob flew up into the air, set the club and stood in mid-air, planting and replanting his feet and wiggling his butt as his hands wrapped the club with the golfers grip.

“This is for hunting one of my kids... you monster.” He said, took a swing like a pro, called out, “Fore!” and swung the club and sent Ivan yowling across the compound to slap against a far wall. “Stay away from my kids!” he shouted after him and then turned back to us with a broad grin, making the club disappear behind his back like he was shoving it up his butt. “Don’t worry... he wasn’t hurt anywhere near as badly as it appears... Though I should’ve made it hurt for real!!” Bob shouted at Ivan as the magical kitty slid down the wall and fell backward onto the lawn. “Anyways... now that you see how silly it is to just excuse natures, then you’ll understand how foolish it is to just say... ‘oh, it’s his nature!’ and then just excuse it.”

“That’s a good lesson, Bob...” a voice said as Pen came walking by just in that moment, serendipitous as ever. “...I’m rather glad that you’re aware of such a concise bit of wisdom. And now I’m aware that you’re aware.”

“Ah damn it...” Bob mentioned through gritted teeth. “There goes all my fun.” Pen merely smiled and nodded and continued on his way. “How is it that he shows up when you least expect it?” Bob mentioned, but then a sphere suddenly appeared around him and he fell to the ground with much surprise just before Ivan leapt onto the ball, the blue lines on his body glowing brightly.

“That... hurt...” Ivan growled, holding the ball that cramped the fairy dragon inside.

“Serves you right, you monster!” Bob shouted through the ball, his voice sounding like it was coming through a pane of glass. “Now let me go or I’ll...”

“Sphere of invulnerability around an anti-magic sphere...” Ivan smirked, rapping on the ball and making a crystalline sound out of it. “...I’ll admit turning me into a ball must’ve been hil-ar-ious!” Ivan said, rolling the word. “Just as hilarious as, perhaps... me turning you into one too.” Ivan batted the ball aside and Bob rolled inside it.

“Whoa... stop!”

“Just until I’m sure that we’re on even terms.” Ivan smirked, and then with a yowl, bounced the ball and began batting it about till they disappeared around a corner of the shrine.

The resulting silence was rather poignant.

“That was humorous.” I laughed and turned back to Mad. “What can we possibly do that would top that entertainment?”

Mad made a pause of thought and then looked slyly at me. “Wanna make love again?” he ventured with a smirk.

“Sure why not?!” I said with glee, and taking his hands, and helping him up, we retreated to the nearest bushes with sufficient cover.

Chapter 2: Ice Born Warrior

Pen had completed his transfusion, which wasn't filtering his blood, but rather he was injecting something into him. The delicacy of this procedure wasn't lost on me, and it was a meticulous and precise thing awaking someone from a deep cold sleep. One had to consider both the physical and the mystical, and they awoke slowly with the drip-drip-drip of a fluid falling from a container and sliding into a bloodstream that was like a slushy inside his veins.

But I sat there on a mat before my Anho late that night, surrounded by a blanket with some of that hot herbal tea that would lessen the effects of my heat brewing nearby while Pen finally removed his pins from the holes in Anhogamon's body and resealed the holes in the ice with ice water.

"On the list of things that a human being finds most fascinating to watch, there is watching a fly crawl up a wall, paint drying, a Zamboni going round and round on an ice rink, and watching ice melt." Pen said quietly with a smirk as he gathered up his tools and things. "You should get some rest Fellania. He's not coming out of that for days yet."

"I'd like to stay..." I said immediately, trying to will the ice to melt faster. I suppose I could make it melt faster, the elemental powers of a druid that were in me could turn that ice to vapor. But that would probably kill him... "For a little while at least. I can stay awake for a long time."

"I know you can... but... you're making this harder on you, you know. It'd be like watching a pot of water coming to boil. The anticipation will make it seem longer." I sighed and deflated greatly. "Besides... once I leave you won't be able to get out, and the dripping water will make you want to go pee at about..." he looked up and rolled his eyes in calculated thought. "Three hours ago."

I eyed him. "You use your powers to see what time I go to the bathroom?"

He shrugged. "I don't always have control of what I do and don't see." He smirked. "Come on then."

My want to stay versus being trapped down here for hours and having to use the bathroom waged with itself, till ultimately I rose with a dejected sigh and gathered the blanket about me like a shawl.

"Perhaps you're right..." I said at last, towering over the little dwarfish dragon. He may be the largest of his kind at only four feet, but his utmost control of Butterfly Effect was a remarkable trait, and who knew what other skills this little package had.

Leading me outside, he gestured and the doors closed, but this time there was a flash of light as something changed, and then a solid wall formed before the door. Reaching out and pressing my hand against it, I felt that it felt real.

"That should deter any additional visitors..." Pen mentioned, and then reached up and taking my free hand, he patted it comfortingly. "Now... I can't hook my arm around yours as a lady is due when she's being escorted, but I do my best."

I smirked. "I doubt you could get both your arms around mine anyways even if you were hanging off my arm," I said and flexed my other arm, revealing the imperiously shaped bicep as it flexed and pushed the sleeves of the robe I was wearing backward to the crook of the arm. The added strength I'd received lately was indeed showing itself off as the muscle flexed so much that my fur thinned and flared and thick, thick veins popped out of the flesh and throbbed powerfully.

“Indeed. But I want you to try to rest, Fellania. I know you’re tough, I know you need to be strong, but while you’re here I don’t want you to feel like you need to.”

“Why would you want that?”

“Why wouldn’t I?” he asked me, looking up into my face as he held onto two of my fingers with one of his hands. “I am your host and a gentleman and this is a shrine of peace... it’s my duty to make you comfortable. Despite how strong and independent you are, despite how capable you indeed are, I will continue to make your life as comfortable as possible till you tell me to stop.

“What with your heart aching like it is and your woman’s body doing tricks to you in your heat... I want you to be relaxed and calm. Situations like this will be rare for you, Fellania, and if there’s one thing that I know about all creatures great and small, is that they don’t mind being coddled at least a little from time to time.

“You’re trying to spoil me.” I smirked but then paused. “How often *will* I have situations like this?”

“This one will end sooner than you think.” He answered and I nodded and then asked another question.

“How long till Anho is out of that ice?” I asked yet again.

He didn’t look at me as he answered. “Sooner than you think.”

Unbeknownst to me, in the chamber we just left... a long, solid crack broke through the ice in Anhogamon’s prison.

I am Remy.

There were many shadows upon the grounds, more than enough for a rat like me to hide within. Any kind of rat, mind you, but as a rat invited onto these grounds of Pendragon’s shrine, I was still nonetheless ill at ease. I was never ‘at ease’... being at ease meant complacency, complacency were what your enemies waited for, and when it happened they typically struck mercilessly, hurting you, hurting your loved ones...

I almost never let my guard down in my life... so why was it then that I was actively going to let that guard down in a moment or two from now? I was planning to let it down even, and the only thing that came to mind as to why was...

...Because I wanted to.

Because I wanted to be in a place where I didn’t have to have my guard up all the fucking time! I wanted to be where I didn’t have to be mindful of my surroundings, keep a mental list of my enemies and wonder how each of them could exploit me in a given situation and prepare at it, not jump at every odd sound or oddly moving shadow.

...I wanted, just for once, to just relax and not sleep with my eyes half open.

So sliding into a tight stand of trees, a grove of cherry trees and bushes with a hollow right in the center of the stand, I paused at the sound of a woman humming with the accompaniment of a samisen.

It was like a siren's call, and all those worries I had just a moment ago about enemies and about monsters behind every rock ebbed away like the rolling of the tides.

The Creator of all things gave us females just so that we wouldn't go completely mad. Our uptight ways had to be counterbalanced by something... gentle... forthright and loving.

Following those sounds inward to the center of the stand of trees, I found Sen sitting elegantly, and quite gracefully, plucking at the instrument in her hands as I watched her from the shadows, focusing on her long and slender neck as I looked upon her white face and white fur and her greatly displayed bosom since her multiple layered robes were hanging off her shoulders. At the same time, her long hair was done up atop her head in a Japanese Geisha style while being framed by her two perfectly unrounded ears.

She was unscarred and unblemished, her life was comfortable and it had deemed her flesh and her fur to be soft and silken to remain the same consistency of the flesh and fur of an infant of our race.

We were born so soft...

But a life of self control and activity had shaped her muscles beneath that flesh and fur so that she could be an assassin if need be. She'd definitely proven to me the seductive power of a female assassin. She'd lulled me into lowering my awareness with her sultry and enticing form, and she punctuated the fatal error of that act by showing me that she could've killed me.

Could have...

...But she didn't. Instead she loved me, gave me her virginity even and punctuated it with her sweet kisses. She was a pure maiden till then, and now she was a pure woman.

Admiring her, looking upon her face and neck and the tops of her breasts, feeling the heat and stiffness rising in my pants, I saw her, I wanted her. She was a delectable piece of candy to a kid, a pearl of great price to an adult, the goal of a lifelong quest, the glass of pure artesian water at the end of a long dusty road.

...But... there was this nagging sensation of warning in the back of my head, something that a part of me was telling me to ignore, but the other part of me was telling me it was important enough to pay attention to. The one part was telling me that she was the one, the perfect one, that I should take hold of her and never let go, while the other part of me was warning me that she was a trap.

Regardless, it was a pity that I didn't know any Japanese songs, but I listened to this one with rapt attention nevertheless... till it was over.

I'd closed my eyes, closed them for a few moments to feel the song, and when I opened them it was to see her directly before me, close before me, so that the only sight I saw were her bright blue eyes. Her robes hung off her bodice, off shoulders and the peaks of her arms and the swells of her pert and perfect mammaries so that only the sheer case of friction held the gowns and robes she wore upward. It was a bare couple of inches of friction that held that clothing around her with artfully arrayed sashes and ribbons... any lower and I could look directly upon her erect teats. The depth of cleavage that I was nonetheless granted made my mind numb with desire.

"I come as bidden, my lord." She curtsied briefly, lowering head and eyes even as she dipped low before me into a curtsey.

I followed her with my eyes and smiled stupidly at the sight of that cleavage before her face, and despite the shadows, my night vision was more than enough to look down her gowns and robes. She was tantalizing even when being proper, and the view of the slopes of her bodice and the second set of breasts seen from between the first made my woody stiffen immediately before she rose.

“I’m no one’s lord.” I told her.

“As you wish.” She curtsied again, but this time she smiled her red-painted lips and remained at the bottom of her curtsy a little longer before rising slowly.

She knew I was looking down her robes... looking at those breasts, and she offered me a longer view of her bodice.

“What did you wish of me?” she asked after rising again, and while I was looking at her breasts, without actually lifting her hands, she tugged on the sides of her robes with her hands to pull the garments down even more as she rose, revealing more of her bosom and the tops of the disks of her areola. I stiffened even more. Her reddened lips showed me the mischievous smile that told me she knew very well what I was looking at, knew quite well what I desired of her and her actions were showing that she was more than inclined to give it.

“I wanted to look upon you... privately.” I told her and my hand flexed in a want to touch her.

“You could’ve done that in the seclusion of your room.” She paused and tugged again, and I saw more of those areola, large pink disks that possessed nipples that were standing on end. The soft pink of those naughty bits were darkening as she blushed in growing readiness. “There is also my room if you prefer. I’ve made them comfortable for any man.”

“I... didn’t want any distractions.” I told her and she nodded, and now lifting her hands, she instead lifted them to the shirt I wore and untucking it from the flowing trousers I wore, she merely nodded and began undoing the ties and buttons of the shirt.

“Mm-hm.” she mentioned, sliding her hands into the two folds of that shirt and her fingertips immediately found the sensitive parts of my chest... just a mere quarter inch over either primary nipple. There she began to minutely rub and caress me, soothing me. “Distractions. You should know that you are safer in Master Pendragon’s home than you are outside of it.” She mentioned, keeping her eyes locked with mine, those luminescent and limpid pools of blue the color of the sky at dawn.

“I know that... but...” and she bent forward and kissed that spot, just over the left nipple, the one that was more sensitive than the other, and I felt her tongue touch lightly against that spot before she retracted and blew softly upon that very same spot, and I felt it go from warm and wet from her kiss and lick to cooling. I felt goose bumps rise up all over me as my arousal deepened and my prick loaded with a priming charge of seminal juices that I wants to place inside her in that very moment. As I bent, instinctively puffing my chest out, I felt her accept that body with hers, her breasts against my chests, my groin becoming nestled sweetly into the bowl of her crotch that was covered by all those silken and lovely clothes of hers.

“Goo...” I exhaled and bit my lower lip with the chisel of my front teeth as she focused her attentions on that spot with her lips, fingers and tongue; kissing it, licking the nipple, fingering the spot while she studiously pushed the shirt I wore up over my muscled shoulders and down my arms to let it fall to the ground.

Ever so soon thereafter I found myself pulling the sash from about her waist which thusly spilled her robes open, allowing her held mammaries, all four of them, to roll outward into the open air. I had to touch her then, and I held

her narrow sides, felt the connection of flesh against flesh as she smiled to me, still soothing me before she took my hands with hers and lifted them to her lips to kiss them with those reddened things, just before she held those hands to her primaries.

In a matter of moments those robes of hers were slipping to hang off the crooks of her arms before she reached up to hang both arms atop a tree, this act lifting and hefting her breasts more into my hands and into my view. Leaning backward then, she let me see a realm of twelve erect nipples, two on her pert primaries and two more upon the subtle swells of her secondaries with the rest lining her long and lightly muscled belly. She arched herself more deeply and sighed as I took to feeling and caressing her breasts, her tail twisting around her long, supple and ample leg. Only the barest of triangles of white silk held up by beaded wire obscured her sex from me and keeping her from being totally naked, but even that garment was beginning to become transparent as her loins leaked their sweet nectar in preparation for me.

Without thinking I caressed the conic swells of her breasts and she sighed from my touch, rolling her head sensually while my thumbs slid about her areola and the pair puffed outward, thickening as the teats erected powerfully, and ever so slowly those mammaries began to expand and swell right beneath my fingers, filling both my hands as she stood there with her arms over her head, sighing nasally.

I'd heard of this, I'd heard of female rat assassins having such body control as this. They became the fantasy of the male they were trying to entice, adjusting their bodies subtly and facial structures like flexing a muscle to become that desired fem... make them even more enticing. Again my instincts were warning me of a trap but I shoed them away.

I was fully erect now, so hard it hurt. I wanted her, and sliding my hands downward over first one pair and then the second pair of her lusciously engorged and fur-thinned mammaries, she cooed for me, her every sensitive sound playing upon my mind with the fact I was giving her pleasure. It was a measure of implied control... I thought I could control her by giving her pleasure. It was a manly thing despite how much I knew it wasn't true. She was allowing me to pleasure her, she was dropping all her guards, all her defenses, letting me into the deepest recess of her heart, opening gates dropping barriers to let me in as deep and as far as I wanted to go.

And I took pleasure in her pleasure as I felt the rolling creases of her ribs, the bands of lateral obliques, the pads of abdominals before I came to her waist and hooked both hands into the beaded wires over her hips that held that eye patch of cloth over her sex, which was already swollen and creasing those panties into a semblance of a camel's toe.

She wanted me... and that's what truly maddened me for her, rose my passions even as I slid her panties off her widened hips that seemed even wider still then I remembered them being. She murred to me as her loins were opened up into the open cool air of the night, showing off her long supple thighs as she rubbed them against each other back and forth, changing the contours and the depths of the revealing view of her sex for me, the act playing tricks on me as those taut vaginal lips of hers appeared and disappeared from view.

And those body parts kept changing before me... as if she were becoming my perfect ideal of a woman right before my eyes. Again my instincts screamed trap as her vulva clenched I let go of those panties and they fell to her ankles after being pulled from the deepest hidden recess of her form, and I breathed deeply at the now opened scent of her loins glistening with her sexual juices. I breathed solidly, wanting her with the fullness of my own loins bowing out the front of my pants. I needed her... I was sick, she was the cure.

She was so perfect!

Perfect... too perfect. If a thing were perfect... it was a trap. That thought snapped itself into my head so fiercely that within seconds I became limp.

“I-I want... I... no... I need to go. I need to go now.” I said and stepped back from her.

Sen merely looked up at me, her eyes were knowing in their captivating allure... understanding as I tucked my shirt back in. “As you wish...” she said to me, and I felt two emotions with those words. One felt like a knife in the heart – I’ve felt that sensation... it’s quite astute that someone would liken heart ache to a knife in the heart – it was quite accurate, and the other was a profound loss even as she stood there with her panties around her ankles, moist between the legs, her nipples erect... ready for me. She didn’t even cover up.

“I-I’m sorry.” I said and slipped from her with a snap of a tail.

All I knew as I hurried back to the shrine, was that there were tears in my eyes. Whereas my instincts were congratulating me in my escaping of the trap, that other part of me was calling me a damned coward.

I am Pendragon. I would tell you all of the titles that I’d received in my lifetime – both real and implied – but that’d take to long. Regardless, the measure of all those titles really doesn’t define a person... all it does is define their accomplishments. I tell you I was the Grandmaster of the Dawn, and you’d nod and go ‘Grandmaster... that’s a great title. Now what’s it mean?’

That was the truth of the matter.

That title arose from the multitudes I’d trained. At first it was master, but when I rose enough students to be masters themselves, those former students still called me master and their students tended to call me Grandmaster because of it. And why the Dawn? Well... currently, there’s a leveling system in this monastic order I’d created, but at the time I came up with it, it just sounded cool at the time.

But that title bespoke of the sort of life I’d lived. Grandmaster denoted that I spent lots of time teaching... enough time to create masters of my students, an entire monastic order upon it, and for a dragon a million and a half years old... I’d spent lots of time teaching and observing those that’d been my students.

Other dragons, Fae, Elves... and of course... humans.

Across that aged lifetime I’d experienced, I’d learned that the humans had created some rather marvelous things in their existence, both remarkable... and terrifying. It was a measure as to the spectacular potential of humankind when the first Dragon Slayers arose. A human killing a dragon was like an ant killing a human in our eyes. It was a measure of impossibility, but nonetheless... it happened.

The magical abilities of our Lore, the all encompassing power of summoning maelstroms and storms paled to the destructive capability of a nuclear bomb. We dragons, the Fae and the Elves were never more so shocked and awed than the Japanese were when Nagasaki and Hiroshima were wiped off the face of the earth by the technology of mankind. This markedly made the third time that I could recall when human civilization overshadowed the other civilizations on this world. At the most we dragons, the Fae and Elves each maybe numbered in the tens or hundreds of millions. The Fae themselves only in the thousands. Humans numbered in the billions!

The inauspicious beginnings of these creatures to beings that outgrew their old monsters and their old gods and their old legends not once, not twice, but thrice over... it was a spectacular and marvelous thing. But humans also create fantastic things.

Thinking machines that were rapidly approaching processing speeds faster than their own minds, the internet: a network that spanned the globe and connected millions together all across her surface, automobiles that ran without a beast pulling or pushing them, airplanes: enabling them to fly without the use of wings or flight spells... and not only that, fly faster than the speed of sound.

I've found that humans effect the older races more than the older races effect them.

The Japanese were most especially exemplified in that regards. Though their entire culture is centered on a series of small islands that was a fraction of the size of their nearest neighbors of China and Russia, nevertheless, the Japanese culture is... addicting.

When one thinks of Martial Arts, one usually thinks of Karate and Ninjitsu first, Wushu, Tai Chi and Kung Fu second, and maybe all the rest developed by Europe and India third. People think of Ninja and Samurai first and the elegance of their art, of the Katana, Ninja-to and Wakizashi more than the Toledo Salazar or Salamanca. Many specialists would state that the usage of European Martial Arts is actually superior to Asian Martial arts, but nonetheless, people think of the Japanese Long Bow, the Samurai Katana and the Monk's Bo Staff before one thinks of the British Long bow, or the Flamberge, Rapier or even the common Bastard Sword... regardless as to how deadly European Martial Arts still were.

Pit a Samurai and a Fencer together and tell me who'd win.

Aside from their martial prowess, which was refined long, long before the rest of the world was out of stone axes and leather loincloths, the Japanese culture was likewise desirable. Tales of Geisha and warrior monks inspire much imagination. It was a seductive culture that affected even the most war-like of people.

I remember the Mongol invasions in twelve-seventy-four and twelve-eighty-one. Kublai Kahn's attempts were thwarted mostly by the powerful storms surrounding Japan – in which the word 'Kamikaze,' or 'Divine wind' first appeared in Japanese culture – Kublai Kahn did manage to briefly take the mainland, but his invasion was in the end defeated culturally by Japan. Kublai Kahn was so affected by Japanese culture in his brief stay here that it was said that he became civil briefly before returning to the mainland. His third attempt to take Japan never happened, because after his death his advisors unanimously decided to leave Japan and its Divine Winds well enough alone.

But militaristically, the greatest swordsman in all of human history was Japanese. He was a man by the name of Miyamoto Musashi... and by greatest swordsman... I include individuals like Gilgamesh and Achilles in that list, but also other beings of greater note among the Dragons, Fae and Elves.

Musashi did more damage with a wooden sword than most other samurai did with a sharpened metal one. That was saying absolutely nothing for when Musashi actually had a sword in his hand.

As such, other than their martial prowess – which I personally had a hand in providing the seed knowledge for – they also had such elegance. Like I mentioned before, humans have created some interesting things... they just get lost in the fervor of all the violence and destruction they cause in the meantime. As such, I myself have taken up a pair of artisan hobbies that the Japanese have created... in the arts of Bonsai and Silk Painting. I do Origami from time to time, but at this very moment I was working on a silk painting.

I always loved silk painting. The elegance and beauty of the art was considerably phenomenal... from everything from their Kanji to actual pieces of art, they were always so elegant and so beautiful... and there was such skill involved, for one had to keep in mind the bleed effect of silk painting.

I was upset that Lee's and Madoushi's fight after the return from Lea Monde had damaged one of my older paintings, but Temporal Reversal was enough to restore it to its preserved and undamaged state.

In the midst of this painting though – a finch on a cherry tree – I paused as I reached to dip my brush into the inks before getting more ink on the brush and wiping the excess off on the hand bowl.

“How may I help you Master Remy?” I asked and continued painting.

“How did you know I was there?” Remy asked.

It was always so enjoyable in letting Ninja and Assassins know that their stealth really wasn't as good as they thought it was.

“I am a dragon, Master Remy. Regardless as to my size, I am still a Great Wyrm. First of all, anybody that enters a space disrupts the air in that space. The air molecules get pushed out of the way since gasses can't permeate a solid, and often times this is picked up subconsciously from others in regards to the ancient instinctive feeling of 'I'm being watched.'

“Aside from that, you produce sound, no matter how quietly moving you may be, the fur on your body brushing against clothing, the sound of your controlled breathing and heart beat, the vibrations of the wood of the cross beams you are on... I could go on with innumerable variations, but you get the idea. Every little thing creates sound, Remy, and as you can notice... my ears are really, really big.

“Additionally, you have a scent that I can still smell even in a room of still air filled with the scents of paints. My antennae are insectid in their sensitivity... many times more sensitive than even a blood hound scent receptors.” I lifted my antennae and they twitched as I put the brush down. “And finally...I can feel every ethereal vibration, every life force down to creatures the size of a flea that exist in my Shrine. I was aware of you with Sen as you moved from the gardens, entered my shrine, transformed into a rat, scurried up behind me and then shifted again.”

“Anything other than that?” Remy asked tersely.

“You have a dagger in your right hand.” I said nonchalantly. “So that brings me to the next question, Remy... is there something vexing you?”

“What is Sen?” Remy asked then.

“A female of the Rat Lycans.” I replied with a shrug.

“I am in no mood for riddles and jokes, Pendragon. You are in a dangerous position right now, and at the moment you are still suffering from my Grandfather's blade. I daresay a second blow would indeed kill you.”

“Yes, but I let your grandfather stab me, Remy. Despite that you're behind me and in a position of,” I lifted my two upper arms and made quotation marks with the index fingers. “'Advantage'... Despite that I have my back to you, despite that I'm sitting and you're standing in a poise of murder, do you really think I'd let you stick me with that needle?” Remy was silent and I gestured before me with a lower hand while lowering the upper two. “I am a Scholar

before a monk, Remy... Violence doesn't become me. Why don't you and I speak to each other face to face? Unless of course," *I lifted my other lower hand and waggled the index finger in punctuation.* "You'd really like the test the skills of a dragon that gave martial arts to the human world."

But the dagger slid beneath my neck and arched its edge upward instead. I didn't move my chin in the slightest.

"Answer my question first." *Remy warned through grit teeth.*

"I already did." *I mentioned.* "She is no more than that, and no less. Whatever is hidden by her is her own design and not mine, Remy."

"That's not what I meant!" *Remy snarled.*

"If it's not what you meant, then ask what you mean."

More silence. "Did you... send her... to entice me?" *he said through grit teeth.* "Is she a trap? Is she some sort of reward you made for me? You saw me in the future and then created my perfect female, didn't you?!"

"Ah... No... all women are traps... yes... and no." *I counted his questions off on one hand. Luckily I had four fingers on each hand.* "Did you have more questions, or would you like to look me eye to eye now?"

The needle-like dagger withdrew and Remy stepped back and around me, and one of my great eyes swiveled in my head to catch him in its vision as he walked around me, keeping his eyes on me while I sat there in the lotus position.

"Care to explain your answers?"

"Did I send her to entice you? No. Why? Because that's not the job of a Geisha, Master Remy. It's a common misunderstanding that the world believes that Geisha are whores. Only the rarest examples of Geisha let themselves over for sex, and by rare, I mean that there are only a few of them per generation that so much as even consider it let alone actually do it. Their job is to relax and entertain... professional escorts as it were, and they've been considered, even traditionally, only to be entertainers. Her job wasn't to entice, her job was to help you relax.

"But Sen is still her own person, Remy. If she gave her body to you for pleasure, then that is left up to her own will as to whether or not she would do that. Also bare in mind that whores get paid... so, so long as you didn't pay her money..." *I gestured toward Remy and looked at him questioningly.*

"No. no I didn't give her money for sex." *Remy exhaled, deflating noticeably.*

"Very well, moving on..."

"Is she a trap? All women are traps. Why? Well... I'd have to go across all of creation to explain that. It's really a learned thing in all truth, but in all reality, what is more of a distracting creature in all of creation than a woman with a really big pair of..."

"Enough of that. Continue." *Remy said as I was in the midst of using all four hands to display an extra, extra large pair of boobies over my chest... that or a four pack of boobs that were at least P-cup for a creature my size... G for humans.*

“Ok... is she some kind of reward? Yes. After delving around Lea Monde for a week, I thought, hey... why not send the nice rat guy a nice mouse girl to supply him with his relaxation needs. What could go wrong?” *Remy was silent, and I eyed him. “But something apparently has gone wrong, hasn’t it?” he remained silent, gripping his hands tightly so that I could hear the tendons grinding.*

“Fine. Did I see you in the future and then create your perfect female? No. Why? I don’t do that. The Fae have been cursed by the Creator Himself for playing god, Remy. It is wisdom in us Dragons not to repeat the mistakes of our younger cousins. I cultivate bloodlines, true, but I do so in order to preserve them. True... this requires elements of supplied marriages from time to time, where I find an individual of compatibility and supply the current holder of that bloodline with an appropriate mate, but all in all, they still have free choice. There’ve been many times where the seemingly serendipitous introduction of a good man or a good woman to a bloodline was rejected by the current holder of said bloodline and either a replacement had to be found or that bloodline holder went off and chose someone completely at random. Often times that other person they choose is a better than the one I intended.

“I sent Sen to you as a favor... a servant of the shrine to help you relax... nothing more. Whatever else she has done, or is doing, is of her own volition.”

Remy grit his teeth and palmed his forehead before sinking to his knees.

“How do I know this isn’t a lie?!” *he grit out.*

“Would I be able to maintain a Shrine of Peace for longer than the human race’s existence if I were a liar?” *I replied and he looked at me. “Lies make bad magic, Remy. Only evil magic-users lie. I am so steeped in the ether that if I did willingly lie then it’d unmake me. I didn’t make her into what she is for you; I made her what she is for her.*

“So now it’s my turn to ask questions, Remy. What led you to believe that I was using her against you?”

Remy was quiet for a moment. I waited patiently.

“Anything that is too perfect is a trap.” *He said quietly.*

“I see.” *I nodded and leaned forward. “Then let me tell you this then Master Remy LeBeau, I am not trying to entice you, force you, or keep you or anything. I employ, I don’t enslave. If you so choose, you can walk right out that front door and out into the night. I haven’t even told your grandfather where you are as of yet... so if you so choose, remain here... or leave. If you stay, I have much to offer you, but if you leave then I can offer you little... a pittance by comparison. But as of now, Sen is her own person as well. If she chooses to come to you, then she chooses to do so for herself and not me.”*

“So you didn’t design her, wean her, prune her into being some sort of...of...”

I waited patiently for whatever he wanted to say, but he didn’t finish it.

“I have the jist of what you’re getting at... and no, she is not any of that. I don’t create people, I don’t have mammaries to wean and she’s not a plant to prune.

“By the way, speaking of pruning, Master LeBeau, I know that she’s been deflowered recently. You of all people should know the sort of faith a woman places in a man to give him her virginity. All men after that first one never receive so much faith in them by the same woman. You should feel remarkably privileged... especially if she

comes to you more than once... even more so if she accepts your advances for such." *I took up my brush and wiped the excess ink off on the edge of the bowl before taking to the silk canvas drawn across its easel again.* "I commend your survival instincts, Remy... but in this case... you can consider them woefully misplaced."

Remy knelt there in thought, and slowly sheathed the needle he'd been carrying... the appropriate sort of weapon to get around a dragon's armor. Slowly he got to his feet, hesitantly at first, and then finally brought himself upward and began to leave.

"You should apologize to her." *I told him as he'd paced past me.* "A woman like that who isn't your typical female wererat giving such faith in you like that... there's something special there and you'd be blind not to recognize it, stupid to recognize it as something else." *Remy turned to look over his shoulder as I said that.* "Not that I don't blame you... living your entire life by the moment... It must be pretty daunting to actually *have* to look into the future and..."

"You've made your point you old Wyrms... and thank you."

"You're welcome." *I replied and said nothing more, and Remy left as quietly as he came.*

Sen was laying face first in my bedding when I returned to my room, resting in that bed if it was also her own, her soft fur and long ping tail soft and delicate like the rest of her, her ankles spread sprawling against the nest of blankets, furs and pillows... invitingly. The pink slit of her sex and the various folds of it between the swells of labial muscle of her pubic mound were immediately visible to me as I entered.

I stood there, looking at her tight rounded butt, remarking on what a nice ass she had with her pert love mound caught beneath the swells and her back and tail making one continuous and sinuous line. Then approaching, undressing as I walked, I disposed of my pants last beside the bedding and slid in against her back. I didn't slide into her, that's the sort of thing a gentleman doesn't do, but instead I laid naked against her, grasping her shoulders, holding her while I remained wide awake there, listening to her calming actually with my hands upon her like that.

I didn't even realize that she'd been so tense before she relaxed into the pillows with a nasal sigh and then seemed to settle deeper into the bedding beneath me.

She felt... comfortable with me. Comfort required safety... she felt safe with me. I was always taught that comfort meant that you were complacent. I purposefully did things to keep myself from being comfortable... keep myself aware of danger.

There was always danger.

How I envied this woman that she could feel as such in my presence, how I awed at the fact that I could make someone feel that way. But regardless... having a woman who could feel this way, who could sleep this way in my presence made me feel...

Comfortable.

The next day...

I dreamed a dream that morning... at about the time that the morning sun was rising. I dreamed of myself atop a mountain, laying naked in the cool evening sun with the sun sinking beyond the horizon and me. A babbling stream rolled down beside me laden with rocks, but nonetheless I laid upon a bed of moss and duff laden with spring flowers.

Cooing and sighing nasally, I felt my body being soothed, a tongue licking my fur flat, and opening my eyes, I saw the broad back of a bobcat-man before me, his hands cupping my knees and a hip at first before the hand holding my knees lifted them. Obediently to his incessant touches, I let my legs raise till both legs were together with thighs pressed close... right before he cupped my knees and pushed them apart.

My legs and loins spread open like the petals of a lotus, labial muscles swelling and the stamen of a clitoris erecting while drawing the inner folds of vaginal muscle out with them. Biting my lower lip nervously I watched as the bobcat-man, his features obscured in shadow since the sun was behind him, but his eyes glowed brightly from within those shadows to look upon me.

He slid between those legs, a great horn of man-meat projecting from his loins as he pressed it against my sex, the heat on his thickened nads becoming moistened by my loins as I arched deeply. Then this bobcat-man leaned forward and pressed his hands against my breasts, bending low to kiss one and then the other, sucking on one teat and nibbling on it with his needle-like teeth till I gasped and with a muscle spasm in both pectorals, brief jets of milk lanced from those teats before leaking endlessly from them as I arched deeper and moaned in readiness.

"Take me my sweet lord." I moaned, and then tasted his lips, sucking on them as he massaged the milk from my tits, rubbing his fingers into the fat of the flesh of my womanhood as he ground his groin into my crotch.

Both my thighs spread wider, labial muscles gaping open, widening as I whimpered for him, the pain of needing his piercing loins to pop whatever bubble it was that was in my loins. I felt hot, very hot and the stream beside me began to steam as if it were fed from a hot stream, and I started to perspire, feeling a microorgasm lance from me as his kisses and hands slid down my body, tracing muscles on their way down, palming my vulva before he massaged the lips, spread them open, and wrapping my legs that were thicker than his waist with either muscular arm, he palmed and rubbed my tummy and took to sucking and tonguing that sex.

A moan wracked from me as the earth trembled beneath me, rumbling and churning as he tasted me, licked me, flicked my clit and nibbled on it with his tongue, drinking my nectar and throwing me into deeper and deeper throws of sexual power.

The fingers of either of my hands flossed through his great mane, even as the mountain behind me split and erupted, but I paid it no mind, the fire in me roiling as a jet of lava shot miles up into the air to splatter the cone of the mountain, while the mouth spilled lava around him and me. He paid no mention to it either as I screamed and churned, belly muscles rolling and clenching while my insides did tricks, and rising, licking the cream off his mouth with that prick looking even bigger than ever, he poised and stroked himself before me.

One strong hand, used to holding a sword, slid up and down that rod that arched with rounded muscles and a flaring head, riddled with thickened veins that throbbed and beat. He grinned at me and his grin glistened in what little light could reflect on it, and cupping my bottom with one hand, that heaving, surging meat was angled for me and I arched and spread wider still.

“Take me... please!” I whimpered, right as that bulbous meat pressed against the spread open lotus of my sex, pressuring the lips and bands of flesh apart as it penetrated, its muscle ridges rolling against the bony ridges inside me as my pussy was actually forced wide around the penetrating batting ram.

Deeper and deeper it penetrated as I came, clenched and then came again, washing his lap and loins with my moisture as he cupped my bottom, pushing and fighting against my incredible strength while walls of lava rolled down to either side of us. Trees lit a fire as my fur matted with moisture, and soon I was laying in a puddle of sweat and milk and nectar, moaning and crying for more.

I roared, and roared again, rolling up onto my shoulders as he delved, pushed, shoved, gyrated until...

I woke up.

My teeth grit as the next building orgasm spasmed from me, and I found myself biting my pillow, gripping the sheets and actually on my chest with my butt up in the air instead of on my back as the orgasmic lance spilled from me.

“Oh damn it...” I moaned and laid there with eyelids half open. “I was just getting to the good part. Ngh.” Another smaller lance spilled from me before I planted my face into the pillow and tried to calm myself.

I felt like I was burning up on the inside. If I looked I was sure I’d see steam rising from my body.

My brain was numb and I groaned from the sexual power that was throbbing in my loins, and by throbbing I’d have to liken it to a madman beating on a snare drum over and over and over and... you get the idea. Suddenly I realized that I hadn’t drank my tea last night in my desire to stay awake with Anho. Unfortunately, I was near enough to sleep at that moment that I had a second dream directly thereafter that involved the same bobcat taking me doggy style that wrought another sexual expulsion from me that I awoke from with a snap.

“Damn it...” I moaned. And rose immediately after awaking the second time, and rising atop those thick, powerful knees and their attached burgeoning thighs and wide hips, both my hands immediately went to cup my wet loins in an attempt to stop it from its incessant actions.

That proved to be a mistake though as immediately those thickened labia clenched and spat another wave of sexual juices as my eyes rolled back in my head and I bit my lower lip as it and my whole trembled from the release like an impact tremor. Several smaller jets followed the first while milk leaked from my fattened breasts as I settled still with both hands between either thigh onto my heels.

The tea pot was brewed beside my bed already at that moment, and grabbing it, pushing the tea dipper in the top of the pot itself and swirling it about, I took the pot, lifted it and drank straight from the spigot of the thing, downing the entire container to the last drop before I threw the blankets aside and then stepped to the shower, turning on the cold water as full powered as it would go.

Water was a cleansing thing, and cold water has always been the only thing on earth greater than the head and fire of the world. Water tamed this chaotic world... without it Earth would’ve been a sulfur ridden planet devoid of life. It’s cooling waters splattered into my face as I breathed into the streams, the water pouring over my back, in between either breasts and butt cheeks, washing over my sex and cleansing the grime of dried sweat, body oils, milk and caked-on body fluids. Standing there though as I massaged both of the titanic orbs that had become of my breasts, and despite the chilling effects of the water and the natural effects of the tea rolling through me, I nonetheless still managed to orgasm one last time there in the shower.

...It got me into a weird mood for the day.

I was... overly sensitive today, so I wore soft clothes, soft underpants, layered silks and linens, predominately to hide the level and grade of the ever-continuing arousal I'd been experiencing. Straightening my back once robed in a heavier outer robe – mainly to hide the lumps of teat and areola as well as the bulging of an aroused pubic mound, I left my room and headed down for breakfast... suddenly aware that I was being watched by anything everything with a penis that I happened to walk by... and... some fems.

I could imagine the cloud of pheromones I was projecting was drawing their attention, but young men that were little more than boys to even elderly males with deep wrinkles from their age noticed me, followed me. I've never been so popular in my life... and I was a fertile princess of my clan!

From my rooms to the dining hall, I had a small bouquet of flowers from roses to lilies and orchids to a great big sunflower, each one inviting me to dinner, or lunch, or coffee or tea, to a movie, a night on the town, straight to their room for some sex...

It was a measure as to how intense I felt at the moment that I was tempted – albeit briefly – to take one or two of them up on the offer. But I had made a reservation... Anhogamon was going to be the one who would have this body and no one else. But it was also a measure as to how well I was drawing males to me as one very unexpected individual even noticed me.

“My-my-my... sweet lady.” Ivan meowed as he trotted along on all fours up to my side before rising onto his hind quarters and doing that ever so subtle body shift to be bipedal. “Might I say that you look absolutely brilliant today!”

I exhaled a sigh... really tired of guys hitting on me, and really having Ivan do it too was almost crossing the line. “What would Mew think of you hitting on me?” I asked and gave him a glowering look at him.

“She'd tell me to tap your ass!” and he hopped up and swatted my butt.

My teeth and fists grit as the flowers in my hand shook and I counted to ten and then sighed.

“No... thank you.” I said.

“Well if you want a little licking...”

“Ivan!” I stopped and rounded on him, and then moaned as I turned and my breasts rubbed against the insides of my robes. “No!”

“Can't fault a guy for trying...” he meowed, bowed with a long sweep of his hand and then proffered a rose to me.

I rolled my eyes and took it before he shook his head rapidly, an earring in his ear glistening before he scampered away, and stepping to the nearest couch with its pillows, I stuffed the pillow in my face and screamed into it before removing the pillow and gasping, seeing some of the shrine's monks smiling at me.

“Aren't you guys supposed to be celibate?” I asked them.

“Not in this shrine.” They said in unison.

I stared at them for a moment. "Not going to happen." I told them.

Then one of the men stepped forward and threw off his robes, leaving a Speedo, and he flexed for me. "Not even in the face of... this?" he asked me, going into several body builder poses to show off the girth of his muscles.

I approached him, lifted an arm and slowly coiled it, the bicep flaring, separating into its two constituent halves, each half showing off its individual muscle chords and tendons while veins popped out. It's girth was so massive it swelled to the size of my tit, larger than my head, so huge it brushed against my knuckles as it blushed with the throbbing flow of blood. The muscular monk paused and blinked at it as I kissed its top.

"Call me when and if you get bigger." I smirked.

The other monks laughed at their fellow before the threesome left the hall. This time I checked that the hallway was empty before I picked up the pillow and screamed into it again.

I needed a man, and the tension was getting me to the point where I was about ready to snap! I was sure that I was at the sexual point right here and now that I could break the world's record for the most men in one session.

Stepping down the stairs to the dining hall, dishing up a pile of food that was massive and heaping and sitting down roughly on a cushion, I began mindlessly eating and concentrating on slowing my breathing, slowing my heartbeat, calming myself and riding myself of any... great big throbbing cock surging up and down, back and forth, round and round and... Damn it!

"Hey..." a familiar voice said and I turned to see Sue sitting beside me. "...You look flustered."

"I want to break things." I told her. "Maybe a nice long work out... lift some weights or something, *anything* to work off all this... damned... URGH!" I groaned and several people moved down the table from me.

And then I felt something climbing up my back before Pen suddenly peaked up over my shoulder.

"What the... Pen! What on earth..."

With surprising strength he straightened my head to look forward. "Just relax." And he jabbed his little claw tips into several places of my neck before beginning to massage it. First it felt hot, and then rather cold, and then numb, and it was like the numbness lessened the sensations I was getting from my sex and nipples. "It is when I have a female in my care that is under a heat like you, Fellania, or pregnant like you Sue, that makes me more than glad that I wasn't born a female." Pen said and continued massaging my neck, making little pin-pricks with his four hands before he hopped down. "There was that brief period where I tried being female... couldn't handle it."

I paused in my thinking and enjoyment of the massage and Sue and I both turned to look at him directly.

"What?" he shrugged. "It was only for a few decades. And I don't think I did anything to really shame the gender. Now look forward Fellania, it doesn't work unless your head is in the right position.

I turned back and exhaled a long side. "Thank you." I breathed before Pen arrived at my side and reaching into a pocket of his robes, removed a lozenge and handed it to me. "What's this?"

"An herbal Lozenge that's a candied concentrate of what you've been drinking in the morning and evening."

“Hey! Why don’t I get any candeh.” Sue smirked.

“Because the last thing I want to do is interfere with your body’s estrogen count.” Pen smirked. “Those lozenges are just for...”

And then there was a zipping noise, and a little butterfly-winged lizard, another of Ba’ab’s brood, zipped in, reached into Pen’s pocket and snatched a Lozenge.

“Candeh!” he squealed and then began unwrapping it.

“I wouldn’t do that.” Pen mentioned nonchalantly and the little broodling turned to hide the candy as he continued to greedily unwrap it. “I mean it...”

“Hit me on the head if you want... but there is candeh that is uneaten and I shall eat it! Nom!” and he stuffed the candy in his mouth and began sucking deeply on it.

Pen lifted a hand and began counting off the fingers, and then right before our eyes the little fairy dragon coughed, choked, spasmed and hunched over himself, started twitching and trembling as he slowly straightened, gurgling and with a mighty spasm, the groin plate on the little dragon flattened and four grand lumps shoved forward in the chest plates as a mane of fur erupted out of his head and his blue coloring turned pink.

“Wow... what happened I feel...” the dragon started to squeak in a high-pitched voice, well, higher pitched than before, and then stopped abruptly.

Then he looked remarkably like a she now as she gripped her throat from the sound of her own voice, palmed her chests and felt her eyes widen, and looking down pulled forward the flattened sheath before her pelvis. And then she squealed!

“Eeek! It’s gone! What happened to me?!”

“Told ya.” Pen shrugged. “That lozenge was made only for females... and since you weren’t female in the first place, it made you into one so that it’s effects could transpire.

“Now let that be a lesson to you then Jason – or should I say Jasmine? – that when someone who’s older than you, all your brood-mates and your parents put together, tells you not to do something, and you do it, and you receive consequences for it, be prepared for an...” and Pen pointed right at the transformed Fairy Dragon with a pointy finger. “...*I told you so.*” Pen smirked.

The new dragoness squealed and flew away quickly, squealing. “Mom! Mom!”

“Ok... what the heck just happened there?” Sue asked.

“Indeed.” I said and eyed Pen and then the lozenge in his hand. “If anything that I don’t want it’s to be more feminine. What was in that candy that would turn a guy into a girl, and why are you feeding it to me?”

“Bio-chemistry for dragons is different than it is for humans and their ilk.” Pen mentioned nonchalantly, folding his hands inside the sleeves of his robe. “Herbal extracts that will help you regulate your body chemistry may have a violent physical reaction to a dragon, while we fairy dragons are a little... eee-eee.” And he lifted a hand and tilted it from side to side to indicate that they were a bit... off. As if he had to tell us that in the first place. “In this case,

chemistry that was meant to balance a werebear's bio-chemistry caused a catalytic transformation in a creature who's entire body can be effected dependent upon environment, what they eat and so on. So in the case of the freeloader's brood, I mean Ba'ab's brood, he's had a rather interesting double-edged sword thrust into him/her.

"On the one hand, she's experiencing the shock of having her identity altered from a male to that of a female."

"Why's that so bad?" Sue asked while cradling her muscled tummy.

"It'd be like you losing your breasts." Pen mentioned. "He just lost his penis and gained her breasts... it's a violent altercation that destroys one's sense of self and forces it to alter. But on the other hand, in short order the little bugger is probably going to garner a profound understanding of what it means to be a female... provided she actually does revert back to a male."

"I don't know whether to laugh or be sorry." Sue smirked and Pen nodded.

"But other than that, anything that *I* need to worry about, oh almighty Pendragon?" I asked.

"Not really. You may experience some small changes... like abnormal head hair growth or increased lactation, but it was really designed for you, not... her." And he jerked a thumb in the direction the fairy dragon had flown off to."

"That's good." Sue smirked. "But Pen... I was going to take Mady along on a tour of the city. Do you have some street clothes we could change into?"

"I should. Your form lock shouldn't kick in for a few months yet."

"Form lock?" Sue blinked. "What on earth is that?"

"Pregnant Lycan females force change into their hybrid forms anywhere between four to six months of pregnancy to better cope with the child growing inside them. It's instinctive really, to create a stable unchanging environment for your cub to grow. Too many changing and you could burst your own womb from your body growing too small for the cub and the cushioning water its in."

"She's in." Sue corrected.

"She's in. But Sue... You're going out?" I asked.

I felt a little hurt for some reason. Perhaps it was because Sue and I always did stuff together, but since she got her man and I kinda got my own, we haven't been doing much together. Well... aside from battling Vampires, Denizens and Wolfmen that is. She didn't even ask me to go along, but then again... this sounded like a date night.

"Yeah. Mad wants to see more of our world, I'm getting cabin fever and... we... kinda need to separate ourselves from Lee for a bit. Everywhere I look he's there, and when he's not keening for me like some lost kitten, he's growling and hissing at Mad."

"Do you want me to have a talk with Lee?" Pen asked, echoing what I was about to suggest.

"No... no interference. The day I can't handle my own problems..."

“...Is the day your problems overwhelm you.” Pen finished and she looked dead at him. “I am willing and able, Susan, but my number one rule is that no one upsets the peace of my shrine, and so far Lee has been the constituent catalyst for that upset.”

And at that moment a dozen pots and pans collapsed in the kitchen and Pen sighed as a dozen Fairy dragons came rushing out of the kitchen, followed by a very angry panda bear-man, and with a snap of his fingers the little Fairy Drakes froze in mid air. “I’ll see you later this afternoon, Fellania.” Pen said directly to me and then waddled off to go deal with the upstarts in his home, very calmly directing the fairy dragons to go clean the kitchen, wash all its dishes – even the clean ones – put everything away by size and peel all the potatoes in the kitchen without using their magic.

I felt Sue touch my mountainous bicep then and I looked to her as she looked up at me.

“You ok?” she asked. “You’ve been... distant lately.”

“A lot’s been on my mind.” I told her and took her hand with mine and gave it a squeeze. “I’m ok. Hopefully I’ll have a pleasant surprise for you and Mad soon, but I want to keep it as a surprise.”

“Does it have anything to do with why you and Pen-Pen go slinking away at times?” She smirked impishly.

“I’m not having a relationship with Pendragon.” I said his name formally instead of familiarly... hoping to show her the distance between the master of the shrine and me. “No, he’s helping me with that surprise I told you about.” I grinned and then deflated folding my hands together. “I feel like a kid who really wants something but I’ve been told I can’t have it just yet.”

“And because it’s a surprise you don’t want to tell me about it.” Sue prompted and I nodded.

“Well then we two girls are just going to have to go do something together then... when you’re feeling up to it... and before this little one starts weighing me down too much.” She said and palmed her washboard stomach.

I smirked. “Or you get form locked. Just look at you.” I smirked. “In little under a year ago, you were just some young woman, lost within the sea of someones, and now here you are, a powerful Felix Lycan, stronger than any other your breed, now with a destiny, a soon-to-be husband and a bun in the oven.”

“Oh I was special back then... I knew you.” She smirked and then rose a bit, hugged my meaty arm, kissed me on the cheek and then rose to a stand. “Now if you’ll excuse me... I wore Mad out last night... and it’s about time I go and wake him up with our morning lovemaking.” She giggled and sauntered off, muscular, powerful, thick, energetic... glowing with her approaching motherhood.

Secretly I was rather jealous as I just looked down at my food, and sighing I set myself to the heaping mound of food before me and I just finished it.

I am Pendragon, Master of Dragons, second circle of the Dragon Council.

My shrine had many purposes to it. It was a shrine of peace, but my shrine had been a place of martial instruction since its inception more than half a million years ago. True my first shrine had once been a part of Mount Fuji, but the mountain’s varied temperament had deflated it’s grandeur and taken half my shrine with it.

Regardless, the mission of my shrine had remained constant and unchanged for nearly half a million years.

Firstly, it was a place of sanctuary. In the chaotic times across Fae, Elf and human, it has been a bastion for those seeking sanctuary from the world and its harsh events. More often than not, those who sought sanctuary were often empowered by my teachings so that they could better face the world. Susan's first mother was very much like that... and she became my greatest student... so great as a master herself that her own martial form, which thusly became the parent of all other martial forms used by the humans today.

Secondly, it was a training facility, home of the modern concepts of Martial Arts the world over. I'd taught Dragon, Fae, Elf and Human...along with the occasional Demon – or dimensional being – martial study and the ways of peace.

Thirdly... it was here that I trained the world's foremost protectors. Being that we dragons were tasked by the Creator Himself to protect the world, I took steps in teaching those who couldn't protect themselves on how to do just that. The list of heroes and heroines I've trained is as long as The Great Wall of China.

I've been called Sifu, Master, Sensei and similar through the eons. Grandmaster seemed to be the most common I was called as of late, and on occasion... Yoda. That one made me laugh. But along with that came Jedi Grandmaster Flash. That one I think was a bit much... but like I mentioned before, a title isn't recognition of who a person is, but rather of their accomplishments in life.

Regardless, there was a school here that taught one of a multitude of Zen Monk traditions... open to both male and female students for longer than the human race had even existed. My lessons have on sixteen different occasions been developed by various individuals into styles that formed the modern versions of Kung Fu in its myriad of styles, Aikido, Wushu, Tai Chi, Ninjitsu, Pencak Silat, Capoeira – that one was my favorite – and Karate. But also, in times past, it had also provided the seed knowledge of a style that, I was proud to say, actually rivaled my own martial style of Drakido.

Sue's first mother had called it 'White Lotus.'

The difference was that Drakido was principally a male art, while White Lotus was a demure female art. Every bit as deadly, every bit as graceful and deceptive, with powerful after effects that could break mountains.

Strong enough for a man, but gentle enough for a woman...

Standing with my voluminous hooded robes now opened, showing off the red body sheathe beneath the white robe, I watched over the great exercise chamber – the largest in the shrine – where dozens of students of varying ages were doing their exercises with the five masters of my shrine. I needed seven masters for balance, but had yet to find individuals appropriate enough to fit the aspects of Steel and Wood.

And what does all that mean, you ask? There are four traditional elements. Earth, Wind, Fire and Water. Japan's original list was five, which was Wind, Fire, Water, Wood and Steel... or Iron originally. I had seven... Earth, Fire, Wind, Water, Wood, Steel and Spirit. Technically... my configuration could give way to the twelve magical elemental schools through combination... but that's a recourse for later.

Presently, there were a few in this chamber that I was directly watching over in their various arts.

But I was distracted... I'd just learned some very critical information recently that would alter a person's life, and I was dividing my consciousness between teaching and milling about delving into the future. But I was also concerned... my visions of the future have been losing their accuracy as of late...

"Beautiful creature, isn't she Remy?" *I mentioned the moment that Remy entered the hall.*

"What?" *he asked looking to me.*

"Remy... your every thought for the past three days has been with a certain demure female. Our... 'conversation' was about that very issue. But tell me," *and I gestured.* "What do you think of her in this light?"

I was directing his attention to Sen as she knelt before a nail board that was on the floor. The nails were quite sharp, and the board was laden with dozens of the nails. Placing her hands on the nail board, she then leaned forward and lifted herself upward into a crane position – knees on elbows, feet dangling off the ground – before she spread her legs slowly outward and then upward, erecting herself atop her hands with only a skimpy chest wrap hemming in her breasts and a thong twisted wrap of cloth to cover her loins.

"Excuse you for pointing." *I smirked and Remy folded his hands before his groin.* "But I've done some inquiries... I know the answer of 'why' she has interest in you."

Remy immediately looked to me as I said nothing more, and in the exasperation I calculated him to have... "Well?!"

"Well what?"

"Are you going to tell me why she's interested in me?"

"No."

Remy rolled his eyes to the heavens and flung his arms in that self-same exasperation I'd planned on.

"And why not?"

"She doesn't know I know." *I told him and then favored him with my gaze.* "The nature of the why requires that either she tells you... or you find out for yourself. I will not betray her trust like that."

He squatted beside me as Sen lifted up onto one arm and then a single finger. By all cases, most people could take the weight of dozens of nails being shoved into their hands... it was pressure per square inch. But one finger alone with her body weight should've meant that that nail would shove itself right up her finger, possibly shattering the bone with all that weight on it and then spill her face first into the nails. The reason why it wasn't doing this was because she willed it not to.

Martial training was one of the first instances of mind-over-matter and mind-over-body.

Of the style of skills I was teaching her in... she was nearly a master. Body tone, body modification, physical endurance, flexibility and endurance. She didn't want to become a super rat, she wanted to be a mouse, small and demure... but able to defend herself with deadly accuracy if need be.

I'd not had a Master of Rats in my shrine in nearly a millennia. Not since the Rat clans left Japan.

“Can I have a *hint*?” *Remy asked, squatting beside me.*

“Sure. Ask her.” *I grinned with a snicker.*

“You’re just like my grandfather.” *He told me as he rose.*

“Now that’s cold. I’m a dick... not an asshole.” *I told him and he smirked.*

“No help other than that?” *he asked me.*

“Yes... don’t seduce it out of her.” *I told him then and looked him sternly and directly in the eye.* “But I will give you a warning. When you learn her secret... it will change your life.”

“Change my life? What sort of secret would a simple woman...”

“Don’t ever make the mistake of calling a woman simple, Remy.” *I said and lifted a finger in warning to him.* “A woman is anything but simple. All the complexity of every species in all of existence that copulates between two or more genders, all of the complexity has always remained with the woman. A veritable roller coaster of rising and falling hormones and pheromones wrapped around a heart of tumultuous emotion directly connected to her brain.

“Look at me... a million and a half years old and I still can’t figure them out completely.

“Compared to females, Remy... we males are remarkably simple in nature, and I’ll suggest you never forget that.”

“No... perhaps I shouldn’t.” *Remy mentioned and rose again, looking to Sen.* “I thought I had them figured out... till her.”

“They think with their hearts, Remy. It may appear to be illogical because to us there isn’t any logic in it. Some men call them stupid and ignorant... ‘*simple* women’. The Japanese culture dominated them, and up until about fifty years ago, men came first and women came second. Women were even required to walk a number of paces behind their men.

“But though there is some thought process in their thinking, Remy, mostly they feel their decisions out based upon their emotional state.”

“What a bloody nuisance.” *Remy smirked.*

“True... But consider for a moment... what is it that would make a woman like Sen make the absolute decision that she wanted you above all other males that she can choose from?”

“Lack of choices?” *Remy smirked and I shot a look at him and his smirk immediately faded.*

“She is a prize, Remy. I have three prominent rat clans asking for her for breeding stock and training. They’re offering me a king’s ransom for her. She could be a princess... a queen if she so chose, she could be richer beyond even your wildest dreams, but despite all that... she chose you.

“Why would she do that? What decision did she come to that she chose you... of all people... to mate with, to give her maidenhood to, to love?”

“A decision that would change my life?” *Remy asked me and I nodded.*

“Most assuredly. And if I may... I have one final piece of advice to give you if you’d listen.”

“Yes?” *Remy nodded once.*

“When you learn of it, it’ll rock your world to its core, and you’d have many options running through your head. I’d ask, Remy, that you not follow in the footsteps of your grandfather when you discover it. Your grandfather’s an asshole, and I don’t think you’re an asshole.”

“How can you be so sure?”

“Because your father wasn’t an asshole. Your father was a dick. Proof that a child need not be like their parent.”

“What if I am an asshole?” *Remy asked with a smirk.*

“Because if you were an asshole, Remy... then you wouldn’t have come out of Lea Monde alive.”

I am Fellania.

Pen was conducting class when I entered his Dojo, watching over the place on a raised platform so he could see over all the many heads.

I just wanted a place to work out, nothing much more than that, and there was a lot of working out going on. In past years, I burned the heats out of me through excessive weight training. The hormones can’t stay in you if you sweat them out.

There was Yoga, Martial Arts, even a sort of Capoeira dance circle going on... but it was the weights that I set my eyes on, and Pen had stocked his Dojo like a state-of-the-art gym. I hadn’t worked out for more than a week... having an adventure tends to do that, and approaching the benches and undoing the fine silk robes I was wearing, I strode to the first set of weights, dressed now only in the ‘*undergarments*’ of these robes, which was a tight chest wrap and a cloth wrapped about hips and loins in the traditional Japanese style. Yeah... it kinda flossed my butt, but no more than my usual work out gear did.

Hanging the robes up on a peg and setting myself to loading a bar up with as much weight as possible, I set myself beneath it, gripped the bar, and began pumping weight. Immediately... I found how light it seemed to be.

Pausing and rising, standing beside the heavy duty weight bench, looking at the weights, my brow furrowed as I looked at the strange black bar with its obviously lead weights. Reaching out with one hand I lifted the bar and more than five hundred pounds on it and curled it in that one-handed. I was in my human form, and I lifted that bar with a certain degree of difficulty, but it wasn’t as heavy to me as it should be.

At that moment, the young fem known as Lilly Jade, a Persian Felix Lycan that hung around here, a woman so innocent in her ways she was practically child-like, strode to the weights and disrobed like I had, only she was dressed in a stretchable bathing suit. It complimented her figure but was very modest too... I’ve never seen a woman with clothes so tight that didn’t show off one naughty bit even in the slightest. No camel toe, no nippleage... any woman of that size should have nippleage at the very least, areola so thick and nipples so large that

even when not aroused they should be showing through her clothing. The most amount of flesh she showed aside from that which wasn't covered by her bathing suit was a little hip that the side-ties of the yellow bathing suit that didn't cover her.

She moved to a rack and removed an eight sided bar of runed metal, and I blinked at her as she then went to stand in a training circle without loading any weights onto the bar. I was confused at this for a moment, but no sooner had she stepped into that circle than did the lines of the circle come alive with arcane magics in a powerful magic circle surrounded by complex glyphs. Setting her feet, she then began to use the un-weighted bar like it was a heavily laden bar with weights.

Her muscles swelled and rounded outward as she took an expert body-builder's stance, but being Lycan she had no need for a weight belt... Since our Healing factors repair muscle rippage almost instantly, not having a weight belt actually helped in muscle training for a Lycan, and because we healed the damage of weight training quickly, we could likewise bulk up quickly. But I was nonetheless amazed at how her muscles seemed to surge as I absentmindedly placed the weighted bar down onto its rack again, astonished at how she began to sweat immediately, and though her muscles were soft everywhere, with just a little detail, as she strained herself I watched the engorgement and the separation to individual muscle strands as she quickly thickened larger and larger, so large and so thick that she looked ready to pop.

Back muscles flared wide, spreading about ribs and over shoulders, neck muscles thickening as they were hugged by all the other muscles. Her bathing suit stretched high and wide, forming a sort of cross against her bodice, and remarkably still none of her naught bits were showed off while she lifted the bar over her head and started pumping it instead of curling it. She seemed just as happy as Sue was when she was bulking up while her thighs and legs swelled and spread and flared out of the sheer sake that they needed to carry all that upper body weight. Her spine rolled outward, and perhaps the worst her bathing suit showed off were the tightened creased swells of her bottom as head and neck were squeezed slowly within her roiling muscles... and then I blinked as I saw a split in her flesh, and a shining blue-green light shone from within.

"Nee-he-he-he..." she chortled as more and more of the deepest of her muscle striations ripped open. "Ha-ha! Ka-BOOM!"

And then...

EXPLOSION!

She exploded! Exploded like a festival of fireworks and confetti sparkles, the loud bang reverberating against the floor boards and ceiling, flashing a cylindrical field in the magic circle from ceiling to floor that held the violence of this explosion. I cried out in alarm, I couldn't help not to, but turning to the others they seemed to carry on like nothing had happened and just looked at me as if I were out of my mind. I gestured to the fading magic circle as Pen came over to me.

"Wait for it." He told me and gestured toward the field where the sparkles swirled about like glitter within in a freshly stirred blue-green fluid suspended in a glass

And then in the center, those sparkling, twinkling lights slowly collected into contours of blue and green, green and blue, revealing a truly ethereal Lilly Jade who was faceless save for the most general of contours and her great wide and smiling eyes. Those eyes smiled as massive arms hugged herself as the rest of her outlines formed themselves into a rippling and surging female of muscular strength... only without physical form.

She floated there, a constellation of collecting lights that began where her heart would be and swelling where her brain should be and spread outward onto what could only be general nerve endings. Bones, organs and sinews reformed themselves, though once again, in a general non-revealing sort of way... unlike that naked blue guy from Watchmen.

Soon, layer by layer, sinew by sinew in some cases formed, before it was all covered by a sheathe that fuzzed outward with fur and a long sinuous yet frilly tail.

The majesty of her figure re-shaped itself, compressing it seemed, before coloring painted itself over her new shell, features and details shaping and she gasped and laughed in elation, floating in mid air as she tossed a rapidly forming mane of hair before she tossed her head and tussled that mane of hair about her.

As the coloring flowed into her, there were parts where trailers of cloth folded over her bodice a moment before her flesh and fur formed, a mere moment before revealing a naughty bit. The cut and jib of the bathing suit was more complex, almost like a super-heroine suit, and once again, as always, it was very modest. It showed off her hard ribs and muscular details that were covered in soft flesh and a fluffy brown fur.

“Nya!” she murred and purred loudly before the field dropped, with a few stray motes covering still glowing parts of her as she settled daintily to the floor... her form more... advanced. Stronger it appeared, yet... agile and as graceful as only a cat could be.

“What... just happened?”

“I went pop!” Lilly mewed, and stooping to pick up the eight-sided bar and replace it, she instead started working with more conventional weights... to hone and tone her newly born body.

“Lilly has some unique abilities,” Pen announced. “All due to her accident. She is so saturated with ether that her body is barely more than a physical shell containing an entity made up of pure light and warmth and love... like a greenish-blue sun.”

My eyes widened grandly.

“Accident?”

“Bio-chemistry... and playing with things mankind is not meant to play with for eons to come...” Pen explained. “Her experiment was meant to remove limiters in the human genome... allow mankind to grow stronger, smarter, faster... it worked... far... far too well. I shiver at the thought of what might’ve happened should Lilly have been a dark-minded person before her accident.”

“So... what is she, a feminine version of the Blue Guy from Watchmen?”

Pen smirked and chuckled. “I dare say that I don’t know her limits, potentially she may out-power Doctor Manhattan. But unlike that character, at least Lilly has a firm hold on her humanity... as well as a fundamental knowledge of modesty – can’t believe I had to see more P and A in that movie than T and A – but like him, she has an inordinate level of skills and abilities that make her... rather unique.”

“I can agree that she’s unique.” I said after watching her exercise like regular people do. “How strong is she?”

“Like I mentioned, I have no idea as to the extent of her abilities, but for now... she mankind’s most wanted treasure.”

“Most wanted? I mean she’s a dear, but what do you mean most wanted?”

“Every military in the world wants her for their experiments... provided that they can find her... provided that they can catch her. I have to admit that a Japanese shrine is perhaps the last place anyone might look for her, so I keep her a guarded secret. Woe unto the world if someone manages to capture and exploit her, Fellania. I am... beginning to consider I am not the right person to be her keeper.”

“Why is that? I thought you were old... ancient. What sort of creature out there is more potent than you to be her guardian?”

“Hee!” Lilly waved at me as she pumped with one arm the full bar of weights I’d been using just a few moments ago.

“There are beings far older than I, Fellania. Some are tens of millions of years old...” and then he leveled his gaze on me as I blinked in surprise at his last statement, but that was nothing compared to his next one. “A couple pre-date the creation of this world... this universe even.” I shuddered and blinked again in surprise that there were such creatures on this Earth.

We were a world orbiting a third generation star, orbiting the center of a spiral galaxy slowly flowing outward from the center of the universe. Over thirteen billion years we’ve been expanding like that... and to think that on this little blue-white world of ours there existed creatures older than time? It was an impossible thing... but then... Pen was the sort of being that couldn’t lie. Not that he chose not to lie, but he couldn’t, if one were to believe what he’d explained earlier.

“She is an ever expanding being of light and love that only grows stronger the harsher this world becomes. The more hurt and harm that happens everywhere on this planet, the stronger and stronger she becomes. She often has weight training accidents like this... like a caterpillar spinning a cocoon, she works out and bursts from her cocoon and emerges strikingly stronger and more able than ever.

“We are doomed if others can replicate that procedure and put it into the grasp of an evil-minded being... so certain requirements for her benefit and the safety of mankind had to be... taken. For her, it means I must coop her up here in my shrine... for others...”

Pen trailed off and I looked down at him. He’d looked away, his eyes were distant and he looked... Sad.

“You killed them.” I whispered.

“Yes and no.” Pen replied. “I don’t murder, and I only kill when I have to, and as of yet... I’ve never had to. But I did have to... erase them. The newspapers called them accidents or missing people. The military will no doubt understand that the members of the team that aided Lilly have disappeared and make the correlation behind it and know something is up. Regardless, these men and women and their families have been relocated, reprogrammed and all knowledge of the experiment wiped... literally... from their minds. They’re useless to the military even if they do manage to discover these individuals among six-point-seven billion people.”

“I don’t understand,” I ventured then. “How did something so powerful...”

“Ah... not power.” Pen corrected quickly and I blinked at him again. “The prospect of being powerful frightens her. They are *‘skills’* and *‘abilities’* when you use them to reference her unique... attributes.” Pen said as he and I watched her lift weights that made many others quite abashed. And the size of her muscles! “She grows stronger every day... and the stronger she gets, the more of that Ether she can contain within herself. For now I can easily hide her signature from those who might want to abuse her, but she’s still growing exponentially with no end in sight.”

“Who could abuse her?!” I asked. “With someone as strong as that?”

“Who couldn’t, with someone as innocent as that?” Pen replied. “She still thinks that to make a baby, a man and a woman just have to kiss. Her idea of sex is making out. She never got that...” he lifted two hands and began mashing the air between them repeatedly, switching the way that his hands were oriented with each mashing. “...Social interaction thing down. In the dictionary underneath bookworm it says see her.”

“Wow...” I managed after a moment or two. “...She’s so innocent it sits on her like a halo.”

Pen nodded. “Suffice it to say, physically, you’re still stronger than she is... in your hybrid form that is, and your magical prowess is keen, but that is a little more difficult to compare with her.”

“Why’s that?” I asked watching this child-like woman with her immense sexual traits that were still nonetheless modest in the way she presented them go through a full workout routine, her normally soft muscles popping and banding, creasing her flesh in intensely massive ways as she began to sweat heavily again.

I knew Lycan that would wear coverings no larger than bandages over their naughty bits to show off their strength and power, or perhaps nothing at all if possible. But what I saw in this maiden was that she had strength, I could feel the energy radiating off her, and I was willing to bet that if she were so inclined she could explode me from the inside out... but instead... I felt calm... safe in her presence, felt even that damnable discomfort of my heat draining from me and I felt relaxed... like I didn’t *need* to be the bulwark anymore.

“You’re BSing me, Pen. What causes a woman to grow and flex as hard as she did before she... popped?”

“In order to test strengths like you and she have, and select few others, I’d have to set up weights that are metric tons apiece. Look at you... you were one-arming more than five hundred pounds a short while ago... and in your human form no less. The world’s record for a woman lifting weights is four hundred and eleven pounds, Fellania, and that’s by using the whole of her body. You just one-armed five hundred pounds.”

“And I don’t know if I’m supposed to feel bothered by that Pen. I’ve never been able to bench much more than five hundred pounds in my human form in my whole life, but now I can one-arm it. Sure it’s difficult still, but the fact of the matter remains that I can still do it.

“What in Gaia’s name happened to me in Lea Monde?”

Pen was silent and I turned to look at him till he answered.

“I don’t know.” He replied at last, and I spasmed in shock. That was the first time he’d failed to answer something. “But I’m willing to wager a guess, based upon what Madoushi and Susan have already told me about their experiences in Lea Monde, that the Blood Moon you encountered there changed you.

“Lycans have always been closely associated to the moon, your powers growing and waning with her every changing face. But the Blood Moon is an apocalyptic moon... and in times past I’ve only seen it appear three times.

“You’ve seen it?” I asked and Pen nodded, and he paused and glanced at me before continuing.

“The moon does things to a Lycan, and naturally the Blood Moon, if it can be called that, is only seen on nights near to volcanoes blowing their tops. In that case it’s a filtration of light that turns the coloring of the moon as it appears here on Earth red. You got to experience an actual Blood Moon... which has happened only three times in my life time.”

“Three times? When did they happen?”

“When the Mother Tree Gaia died, when Atlantis fell, and the night that Christ died.” Pen answered and I blinked in surprise at each of these before he looked up at me again. “You’ve been transformed inside Fellania Bloodclaw, and whether or not it was the Blood Moon, a gift from your first mother, something from White Oak, or a combination of all of those things, maybe none of those things, but if you wish to explore your new thresholds then I’d be glad to help you with that.”

“I came in here to burn off some of this heat.” I told him and palmed my muscled pelvis. “If you want me to explore new heights, then that’d be killing two birds with one stone.”

“Then let’s get started. We have some time to kill as it were before our guest arrives,” he smirked at the reference of Anhogamon. “So why don’t you start by taking up that rune staff Lilly had just been using. It’s enchanted to have variable weight levels, and when used in conjunction with an artificial gravity well, you can find that you’ll bulk up faster than you can say Bob’s your uncle.”

“Pen... that’s a poor joke.” I scoffed. “The last thing I want in life is to have Bob be my uncle.”

The baths were communal, and were essentially a great hot spring of many pools that started from a waterfall that spilled from a natural mineral spring. I’d followed her here after her work out of limbering Yoga stretches. A rat’s prowess was being small and dexterous, lithe... like the cats, with maybe the exception of Sue and that Lilly Jade woman. A rat wasn’t a rat unless he or she could fit between a pair of standard width jail cell bars.

So Sen was lithe, athletic... and rather limber. I could attest to how limber she was too. There was this interesting way that she could get both her ankles behind her head and... but anyways!

From the bushes I watched her bathe, watched her hands encircle her breasts and her fingertips alight upon her nipples. She had six of those... most Lycan females had at least four, but our breed was lucky enough to have twelve. Two sets of primaries, a pert set of secondaries, and six tertiaries hidden along her long and narrow hour-glass shaped belly. She had the rounded hips and behind of a breeding female, the sorts of attributes that markedly made her such a prize to other clans.

With all that beauty, with all that perfection, my Sen... my Sen... could go wherever she chose, and so long as she remained fertile and was pregnant as often as possible she could live like a queen... a guarded treasure... but instead she’d chosen to delay decisions to go to those other rat clans and remain here... with me? No... not with me... with Pen. But then if she was remaining with Pen, then why was she interested in me?

Paradox inside a conundrum inside an enigma. Pen assured me that I was just overanalyzing things, but as I watched her clean herself, I began to grow stupid. The Creator, in His infinite wisdom, had given us males two heads and only enough blood to run either of them at once. But as my higher brain functions dummed down, I rapidly began to see and feel simpler thoughts.

What if Pen was right and all she wanted was me for some damned reason? Females were such strange creatures. There was no damned logic behind them at all!

I got angry about it and was about to leave when those cleansing hands of hers slid down her body, tracing creases in musculature and sliding over rounded hip bones and such as she then palmed and rubbed her subtly muscled belly and paused there as she looked at her reflection in the water from multiple angles. She turned first to catch her side reflection, and then bent backward and still palming her belly, smiling gaily at herself, she cooed and hunched her shoulders, closing her eyes as she just stood there... and breathed.

But I couldn't help it now, my anger left as soon as it came as I watched her body slick with water breathing subtly, watching the rise and fall of her bosom swelling and contracting with each breath, her thick tail laying over the rounded swells of her... nice... tight... shapely bottom. I swallowed, and felt that second head of mine rage and surge angrily in my pants, bowing out the fabric with a want to once again feel her inner muscles squeezing and clenching around it.

Nevertheless, it was quite the intriguing view of her as she stood there with her soft pink palms on her belly, the little white claws on each finger revealing how free of violence her life had been being that each one was sharp and clear. In-fighting among the rat clans almost undoubtedly turned a rat's nails black by the time they reached adulthood. Looking to my own claws I saw that they were as ebon as flakes of obsidian. In comparison to Sen, suddenly I was ashamed of every throat I'd ripped out with these hands.

Sen stood there for the longest time, just rubbing her belly, and something in my mind struck me with a ping, as if I should be catching on something right now. The mental sensation was so poignant that I gave an involuntary spasm from it... but that might've just been my mind working as hard as it had been on what Pen had told me about her.

Sen has a secret... and it involves me, and whatever it was that she was hiding would change my life.

My thieving instincts and senses were going into overdrive trying to discern what it was she was hiding from me, and no matter how hard I tried to figure it out, I just... couldn't... figure it out! ...and this boner wasn't helping things at all at the moment either.

Regardless, while others below were bathing and splashing each other, up here in the higher pools where it was marginally secluded and quiet, I sat there observing her from behind the cat-grass... before pushing my trousers off, that thick hog of mine flipping upward and erect before I discarded those pants and slid into the water as stealthily as I could and floated toward her.

A floating body dispersed less motion in the water than a moving one did, and using only toe tips and finger tips to steer and propel me, I moved in on her till her shapely behind was in sight, her pink tail and shapely figure all that I could see. Planting both feet upon the sandy ground and rising quietly behind her, I palmed her shoulders and squeezed them before pressing myself against her back, my erecting fitting itself neatly into a crease between her tail and one butt cheek.

She didn't flinch, she didn't startle... she knew I was there the whole time!

“I was admiring you.” *I told her.* “It won’t matter how long you look at yourself, you’ll still look as lovely.”

“Your words are charming, mister LeBeau.” *She told me.* “You have the reputation of a man who can entice any woman.”

“Not any woman. If I could entice any woman then I’d have far more notches on my belt.” *I felt her tense beneath my fingers.* “But then I’ve been thinking of throwing that belt away. It doesn’t really keep my pants up anymore.” *She relaxed.*

I’d be a fool not to notice that she wanted me. It was a different kind of want. It was more than a one-night-stand, more than the thought that she wanted to possess me and make me a thrall. Instead it was an impossible feeling to receive, for me. She wanted to stay near me... and that was it. She let me hold her... hell... what sort of woman let me undress her whenever I felt like it? I was certain that if I wanted to undress her in a public setting she’d just let me. What sort of woman went out of her way to let me see her whenever I wanted to without making any requests in return? Most women would be begging for ‘personal space’ now, calling a guy like me a psycho because I wanted to be near her, touch her, feel her and pleasure her.

Crazy, clingy women would be calling upon me like that... not the other way around.

She was going beyond the art of a Geisha too. Way, way beyond that art. Geisha were entertainers; they got paid for their arts. That was why they were commonly mistaken for prettied-up whores, because of the act of being paid for their work. So why did this woman find me so desirable... find me so desirable? Why did she want to be with me all the time and not ask for one damned red cent?

Most women I’d had by now would’ve run out on my because I’d run out of money to stuff in their G-string.

“Your eyes had some deep thought to them a moment ago. What were you thinking about?” *I asked her and slid into her back more, dipping my head to kiss her narrow neck.*

She lifted her tail subtly, an interesting little trick, for the moment that tail tensed and then relaxed, it pulled my unit neatly and warmly between her wet butt cheeks and the base of her soft tail, forcing my groin to fit snugly toward her. She smirked and sighed nasally as this act drew me enticingly, intimately toward her love mound. Sex... no... lovemaking was assured now.

I had to admit... I liked a nice tight ass... and hers was nice and firm and taut, wide and rounded. A badonkadonk without all the bouncy flab.

“I’m honored you’re so interested in me, Mister LeBeau.” *She sighed with a smile and embraced herself, arching her back deeply and rolling her hips backward more against my groin as she still looked downward at her reflection.*

Her smile broadened and I lost my mind a little more as her rolling hip action drew my unit downward a bit, and suddenly with the weight of her tail my erection was strumming her between her legs, with the heat of her loins directly over the long rod of mine.

“Enough with the titles. Can’t you call me by my real name? You can call me Remy if you want to. I want you to call me Remy.”

“I want to... but it’s not proper at the moment.” *She replied.*

That took me aback a bit. "When does it become proper?" I asked and she fell silent again. "Sen..."

"Customs... dictate that I call you by a title." She told me and hung her head a little, hugging herself tighter. "Sir... master... mister..." she trailed off as I fingered her chin from behind and turned her, and she twisted obediently till she and I were looking directly at each other. "It is the way I was raised..."

"And walk several paces behind me... be silent unless being spoken to... have no opinion of your own..." I asked her and her lips pursed for want of a kiss. I kissed them with a light peck. "Customs in my books, Sen, are a waste of a woman."

She turned then and palmed my chest at first, my prick sliding around her thighs before her hands slid upward and instead wrapped around my neck she kissed me then, her largest four breasts pressing and sliding against my chest. The next few motions were all done automatically...

I cradled her bottom, she climbed up on me, wrapping both her long, sinuous legs about my waist as she and I kissed and kissed.

I waded into the back of the pool, behind a curtain of water that splashed down over us as we passed through it... all so that we could be secluded by the curtain of water and the weeds of the cat grass.

There on the sandy edge of the obsidian pool, I laid her down and we kissed and kissed again.

Somewhere, she went from legs being folded together and tucked beneath me, to raising them and spreading them, an accepting flower that it took two nimble rats like us only a moment or two to... join.

And we made love.

For a moment a thought struck me before we two began the rhythmic course in tune to the lapping waters about our legs to garnering pleasure from each other, and that thought was...

Was I lucky? Or was this a trap?

I am Fellania.

Pen knew his stuff. He knew an exercise to stress every little muscle I had in me, right down to individual brachials. Every little muscle strengthened likewise strengthened the others around it, and I picked up a thing or two for my arms and legs... get those annoying spots on me that wouldn't thicken to tweak out a little.

I was freshly washed now after a workout that'd been so invigorating to feel real resistance again that I kept pumping iron until I could hardly feel my muscles from the burn any more.

Feeling my muscles groan and grow stronger again, getting so involved with it that Pen had to come fetch me after most of his dojo had retired for the day and told me that it was enough. I was often kicked out of the gym back home because I wouldn't stop working out... and here I was nearly at muscle exhaustion! It felt so bad it was good. It meant that I was going to strengthen rapidly and drastically for the first time in... what... years? I'd cycled through Pen's teachings at least a dozen times before now.

After a quick shower and dressing in new linens before donning some simple sweats and a hoodie – dispensing from the voluminous robes this time, Pen and I delved once again beneath the catacombs of his home.

“I’m expecting that only a few days remain with the defrosting effect, Fellania.” Pen was saying as I finished drying my hair, a new confidence in me with the glistening muscles I had bared out into the open.

The sweats were maybe a size too small for me. They didn’t cover the ankles, recessed bottom and crotch, showing off my rounded butt while dipping low to show off my navel. The top, due to the size of my womanhood, barely came to my ribs to hem in those fat mamas, this in effect showed off the hard, deeply creased muscular pads of my human-form’s bodice. The sleeves only came to the elbows because either bicep and tricep were so thick that the whole of the sleeve had to stretch wide in order to contain them. This revealed the rippling chords and bulging brachials of either arm. I was aroused... but it was a different sort of arousal than the one my heat kept giving me... this was the exhilaration of becoming stronger.

“A few days... ok... a few days.” I repeated I mentioned and pulled the hoodie up over my mane of hair to hide it till I could properly brush and condition it... those things were in my room.

But then standing there, thinking of Anho, a little of my heat returned to me and my loins clenched for want to feel a shaft piercing them... his shaft, and I began to wring my hands at the varied thoughts of waiting for that beautiful Anhogamon to at long last enter my life.

Pen reached up and held my hands with two of his four to keep me from wringing them.

“Be calm... Take a deep breath.” He urged me and I took a deep breath and let it out slowly to calm myself. “It shouldn’t be long now.” Pen then gestured with one of his lower hands and the wall before us disappeared, the locking mechanism unlocked and the two panels slid open and the pair of us entered.

But when Pen clicked his fingers to activate the lamps, we were both brought up short.

The ice block had been shattered, broken to pieces and strewn about... and its inhabitant was gone.

“W-where is he?!” I blanched. “Pen! Where is he?!”

Pen looked about and then turned immediately, gesturing toward the door and it slammed shut.

“Still here.” He said, his antenna lifting and arching forward as they twitched... smelling the air as exhaled a breath of vapor from the air being so cold from the scattered ice. “Be calm Fellania... show him there’s no threat, and...”

There was the sound of ice being broken, right before the sound of a blade clearing a scabbard. Then in the next moment there was a yowl and a flash of steel that came swinging for me. I ducked back but the blade split the sweats I wore right between the breasts with a brief ting as the blade cut right through several tines of the zipper, disgorging my breasts explosively. The pair rolled and cajoled outward as I fell back against a wall, slamming against it before yanking back the hoodie top and pulling White Oak from my hair, the ancient tree extending into a runed staff in mid-pull before the next two blows from the incoming flashing steel blade caught on the wood of White Oak’s Staff shape that had become harder than any metal known when it was like this. The flashes of blue steel sparked with the green from the staff as two relic-powered weapons clashed with one another.

In a way, staff and sword made intimate love that ignited with fire like that, and in the brief flashes I saw... saw an animal! A vicious, powerful, rosy figure laden with heavy fur in the poise and art of a master swordsman. I'd... I'd never fought anyone of his like, no one had ever been so skilled, and it was everything I could do to keep myself from being skewered by that glistening silvery-blue blade that burned like fire whenever it nicked me.

And then I was being braced against this being, and suddenly I saw the silver-blue eyes that were maddeningly on-fire, bestial, feral. I had height and strength, but nonetheless when this creature braced against me he was immovable... the concrete beneath his feet broke before his body would move, but nevertheless... I saw exactly who I was fighting.

"Anhogamon..." I breathed, and my awe almost became fatal as he shifted the top of my head off but I caught it... only to find myself the one holding him off now.

Such... strength! He was immovable, hard, a solid lump of iron! It seemed as if I was about to lose... and then...

"Fellania! Eyes!" Pen shouted and I instinctively covered them right as a massive flare the brightness of a naval flare that filled the entire chamber, and I heard a man-voice yowl cat-like as the force of the body disengaged.

When the flare faded, there was the image of a stumbling cat man, his head surrounded in a mane like it was a halo, right before Pen scampered up his body, gripped the tuft of fur at the peak of his chest with his two lower hands and the cat-man's ears with the other two hands and... then belched.

Belching fire was what most dragons do. Some belched lightning; others belched frost and still others belched sound waves and a myriad of other abilities all called '*Breath Weapons*'. The rare few belched gasses... usually poisonous, often corrosive. A Fairy Dragon was unique in all those terms being that their breath weapons was like the equivalent of becoming stoned off a kilo of marijuana dipped in acid... without the brain-killing aftereffects of those substances.

The breath weapon, with no other place to go, billowed like a smoke grenade, filling the chamber quickly with a pink, sparkling substance that numbed me as it reached me, was absorbed by the very pores of my skin. I tried not to breathe, but it was too late. The plus of this was that the cat man was immediately rendered incapacitated.

...The down side was that so was I.

Chapter 3: Boxes

Smelling salts woke me a short while later, and I rose with a jiggling of unbound and milk-engorged breasts, coming up immediately for air with my mind subtly numb.

“Careful... you don’t want to faint from blood rush.” Pendragon was saying as I rose and coughed, my head swimming as the room spun and had contrails like I’d just dropped a pint of acid right on my spinal cord.

“D-damn you and your friggin’ breath.” I moaned and palmed my head, sitting up with more wobbling of breasts.

What I hated most about Pen’s dragon breath – wait... when the hell did he use it on me before? My mother? Was this a memory? – but regardless, what I hated most about it was that it made me feel slightly... aroused. I was blushing... a deep blush that suffused cheeks and breasts, deep enough to show through my fur. I pinched my legs to hide the fact that my loins were so pert and erect at the moment. It did not help, one iota, that I was also in heat right now.

“Never failed me yet.” Pen said and I heard him padding about before he came back and taking my hand, placed a bowl of tea in it. “Drink. This will clear your head.”

I drank, and the resulting sensation was like having my head immediately dunked in a pail of ice water. “Whoa. What is this?”

“An elixir. Usually used to wake drunks up... but it works well enough on the effects of my breath weapon.”

“What happened?” I asked, and accepted a pack of ice to place against my forehead as my vision cleared.

Pen looked over his shoulder. “It appears as if your Anhogamon has been up to some mischief since his separation from your first mother.” Pen replied quietly. “I don’t remember him so... stalwart.”

I turned my head and looked, seeing a nearly naked Anho laying against a bed atop a raised platform in traditional Japanese style. A steaming washcloth was on his forehead and several heavy blankets were strewn across him to cover him from feet to chin. Now that he wasn’t obscured by the ice, I felt my lips between my legs purse tightly, clenching, knotting as I was presented with memories of a very virile and well-built cat-man placating my sexuality with his manhood... back and forth, up and down, round and round... I pressed my thighs more tightly about those loins to quiet them, and then pursed the supple lips on my face as I felt myself... drawn. I never wanted anything more in my life at that moment, my heart pattering and pounding, beating passionately as I stood, still with thighs pressed together and I fidgeted as I got a good look upon his face.

He looked older than my mother remembered... sort of. His mane and his beard obscured the hard, wild masculine features of someone who lived by the sword and was ready to die by the sword, someone who lived in a time of utter chaos where peace was rare and precious. I started breathing deeper and harder, my teats erecting hard as they swelled till they ached, and I exhaled an imperceptible sigh through my nose, feeling my woman’s heart quicken, thudding harder and harder, the pulses exploding through me and pounding into my loins until...

“Careful Fellania... any more arousal from you might wake him up.” Pen smirked and blushing deeper, I shot a glowering glare at him before folding my arms and cupping my hands to cover the ends of my teats to calm their aching strength. I was getting moist with sweat yet again... but thankfully the panties that I wore had managed to stay on me during the fight ground as my muscles expanded as they clenched.

“Keep your nose to yourself...” I growled as I approached.

“Antennae actually.” Pen sniffed and the pair rose and arched forward for me to see as he tugged on the end of one of them. “They’re far more sensitive than my nose is.”

I rolled my eyes as he grinned at me. It was his way to make light of serious situations... This shrine was based on practices of the Smiling Happy Buddha... Religion through laughter, and it fit him in all honesty. “Why do you mean more stalwart... how did he escape anyways? I thought you saw everything before it happened.”

Pen’s demeanor became grave suddenly and he frowned. A frown on him was as out of place as a male badger wearing a wedding dress getting married to a female squid in a tux in the middle of a snow storm in Antarctica. It worried me immediately.

“I’ll admit that I don’t see anything... but my margin of error has never been this bad. A few hours, maybe... not by whole days. I didn’t expect him to leave his prison for days yet, Fellania. By all accounts he should still be within an ice block six inches thick. Believe me when I say that I’m... very concerned about this turn of events. I have some hunches but... no... she couldn’t have. This room was shielded from everyone including her.”

“Her... who?” I asked.

“Lilly.” Pen answered and I blinked, remembering that simple cat-woman that strangely was as muscle-bound as Sue was... but there was something incredible about her. But until Pen continued, I didn’t know exactly how incredible she really was. “I can’t see her at all.” Pen admitted. “The future is always askew whenever she is involved. She’s what’s known as a ‘*Wild Card*,’ to seers and scryers like me. Nothing that she does shows up on any E.S.P. in creation... not even mine.

“I doubt that the Fates themselves could see the actions of a Wild Card.

“I’d have to run a few tests and scenarios, but... no she couldn’t have. Something else is interfering here.” He folded two arms into a thinker pose, the other two coming to rest on his narrow little hips as his tail slapped the ground and his ears and antennae twitched in irritation. “Something else... something else...” he started tapping a foot irritably.

I stared at it. He really was thrown for a loop here.

“But what do we do about him now?” I paused and thought. “And what do you mean that he’s been up to ‘*mischief*?’” I asked and waited as Pen kept tapping a foot. “Pen.” Still thinking. “PEN!”

“Hm? What? Sorry? Oh yes... Anho. His recovery has accelerated. Putting a hot washcloth on the forehead of a recently frozen warrior? Not a chance... he should be going into shock and *dying* as we speak. But now... his body is already compensating for the radical change in atmospheres. Either he has developed some tricks that I cannot see or someone else is interfering on his benefit somehow. Someone greater than me even, and by my count, there’s only one or two individuals that could do that beyond my capabilities.

“I know not what memories you may have of him, Fellania, but he’s... changed, from what I remember of him.”

“A journey of many decades that gets you wound up frozen in the ice in Antarctica will do that.” I mentioned, still fidgeting, twisting my fingers and biting my lower lip as I looked down at him.

He was so handsome, so alluring. I'd never looked upon a man and considered him beautiful before. He was small, but for his size he was strong, tough... like a solid lump of chiseled iron wrapped in a taut leather covering lined with fur and set to a feline appearance. He was as sharp and as hard as the sword that rested on the floor beside him, and about as weathered as the scabbard that sheathed it. A man's man...

I was feeling wanting, possessive, selfish... I wanted him all to myself, I wanted Pen to leave so that I could be alone with him, even in his sleep. I had dreams and fantasies that the moment he woke up he'd ravish me, and those thoughts made my loins and teats come more and more alive, and the panties I was wearing were soon getting soggy.

"Shattering of Pangea and tectonic drift will also do that." Pen mentioned with a glance and a raised eyebrow in my direction. My returning glare told him to mind his own business. "Chances are he was frozen in the mountains during a snow storm and never thawed. The great mystery as to why he never returned to your first mother has apparently been answered. It wasn't that he abandoned her... it was that he was unable to return to her."

His words made my heart soften, and that part of me that was my first mother relaxed... and the relaxing of stress of three hundred thousand years made me feel like a sudden irrevocably massive weight had suddenly been lifted off my shoulders. In its wake I felt myself swooning as I lowered to his bedside, lowering my arms from my breasts, letting them wobble and dangle, and despite that Pen was still here I lowered myself and laid against him. My breasts cleaved to conform to his body, one pressing against his firm bicep, the other flattening between me and his chest, and though they were still contained within the radical cut robes I wore – well, sort of contained – my breasts spilled onto his chest.

He was cold... he was cold but I remembered this touch, this sensation... but he was harder, ropier... stronger... tougher. The years of separation from when he left me... I mean left my first mother had made him even greater. I wanted him badly, and try as I might I couldn't stop the subtle trickle of arousing juices as I smelt the beginnings of his pheromones as he continued to warm after thawing, and I pressed my nose and fingers into his thick chest fur and smelled deeply.

"I forgive you for not coming back." I said in a whisper and rising, took the washcloth off his head and turned it over, but before I replaced the cloth I bent and kissed him over the brow, and after I replaced it I tussled his hair with one hand. "He needs a haircut." I said quietly.

"He'll need food soon enough. Baser requirements first, Fellania. His muscles should be atrophied from disuse... but strangely they remain quite potent and strong. Perhaps I've underestimated the preservation of extreme cold on a person. I can imagine it was still nonetheless very painful to move a short while ago. It would've made him instinctively berserk like he did."

I tucked Anho in, folding the blanket about him and used my own body to warm him as Pen approached and placed his little hand on my massive and ropy shoulder.

"As for the Mischief..." Pen mentioned. "I couldn't get a good feel for it when he was in the ice, Fellania... But for safety's sake I've stowed his box away."

"Why?" I blinked, looking at him, remembering the box that Anho had carried with him, protected with his life and risked his death to retrieve. It was never out of his sight. "What's in the box?"

“That is a question a woman a hundred thousand years ago asked... and her curiosity doomed the human race to sickness and hardship. It’s the curious eye I protect it against. He will ask for it, undoubtedly. Tell him I have it and I’ll give it back should he awaken before I return.”

And he turned to leave.

“But... where are you going?” I asked.

“Food and water. I have a cornucopia stowed away somewhere... but be mindful that he needs to be kept warm, Fellania,” and he turned to me with a smirk and gestured at us with a hand and a wiggling index finger. “Just like that actually...”

“I’ll leave you two alone then.” And he passed through the doors and they slid quietly shut behind him.

Warm... gotta keep him warm, I thought to myself. Well, what warms better than a nice fur pelt?

Rising up onto my knees, I removed the ruined robes and the halter top I was wearing, spilling the great mammary orbs decorating my chest, the spongy innards expanding the pair as they were freed being that they were no longer compressed before I shifted forms into the great brown bear shape I possessed. Then peeling the blankets back, just the top layer, I laid against him and covered myself – well, my bottom self – with the blanket and laid against him. Breasts cleaved to the sides of his chest, groin against my hyper-muscled belly, with my thick, hard muscles framing the ropy knot that he was.

Settling against him, I dared to lay my head against his chest, pressing a large rounded ear of mine there, and I listened to the slow, steady yet powerful la-lump, la-lump of his heart, listening to it getting more energetic and stronger with nearly every beat. Triggered memories stirred with that rhythmic sound and I had a waking dream.

I was naked, laying against him as he was naked, his hardened erection fit within the bowl of my pelvis and thighs. We were in a cave large enough for me to stand, heated by a hot spring and the fires of lamps and a fire pit. It was very, very warm here, comfortable in the winter months. He’d been injured and I was nursing him back to health, sometimes figuratively, sometimes literally. In his unconsciousness he nursed from my breast for nourishment.

The image vanished with one sudden and very poignant sensation, one that got my eyes to bug out and my lips to purse and broaden against my face as I found myself laying against a short yet powerful man... who was getting a rather poignant erection. It fit itself as it lengthened from my upper belly to press between both breasts as it thickened beneath the blanket, and with eyes still wide I felt it thicken and swell and...

I closed my eyes... and perhaps it was the lingering effects of Pen’s breath weapon on me, perhaps it was another waking dream or memory, but I had several dirty thoughts that very quickly made me very, very wet, sensations that made me moan... but in my next mental images I was on my back, legs spread wide as he rolled himself over me, kissing me at the very moment he penetrated me with an impressively large enough maleness to please this much, much larger feminine form...

I am Sue.

Madoushi and I were getting ready for a night on the town... well getting ready amidst groping and kissing, fondling and groping, and somewhere in there we shifted from helping each other to dress to helping each other to undress.

Ah me... to be in love... and more explicitly away from some possible distractions like Lee. Honestly... he was like a lost puppy...

Mady and I might just get a hotel room or something, and exiting our room and falling against a wall, one of my legs lifted as Mad fingered the fabric of my panties aside for penetration, I was feeling so enticed that I was about to hike up those skirts of mine and let him in! Ooo... that big-dicked, relationship repressed man... I've never been so aroused or incensed for so long since I came to know him... that as he came to me and we kissed, making love with our faces, I for one was oblivious to who else may've been in the hall, and quite possibly so too was Mad for that matter, for suddenly...

"Eee! Are you two making another baby?" Mad and I separated instantly to see that towering Persian Lycan, the fem known simply as 'Lilly Jade' standing before us, back arched and hands folded before her, her eyes bright and her face beaming with child-like awe. "If you are can I watch? I've been so fascinated with it I want to see it happen! Nya!" she said with much glee.

"Ah... no..." I managed with a wry smirk. "We already made the baby. It'll be more than nine months yet before we can make another." I poked my belly. "Room filled... no vacancy."

"So then why are you kissing again?" she blinked.

"Well because we love each other." Mad prompted.

"But... I don't understand. I... I thought that every time a man and a woman kiss, they have a baby."

Mad and I stared at her. Truly she wasn't that simple!

"That... might... be a bit of an over simplification of the process, Miss Jade." Madoushi blinked.

"You mean... every time a girl kisses a boy – mew – she doesn't have a baby?" I whimpered. "Oh..." she thought. "Sometimes has a baby? Oh I know! It's because you haven't had yours yet!"

"Yes and no. Lilly, I'd be glad to explain it... but... Madoushi and I are going out for a bit."

"Ooo! Can I come! I've wanted to leave the shrine for awhile now! Ooo... are you going to go to the city?! Mew!" she mewled happily, her whiskers twitching.

"Um... You're not really..." Mad Gesticulated briefly and I turned to him to zip up his pants noticing his barn door was open since we were this close to having a romp right there in the hall. "Thank you... You're not really in the right shape to go amongst humans." Mad mentioned, trying to belay her coming with.

"Oh... right... well I can fix that! Nya!"

And right before our very eyes, this titaness began to diminish and shrink, her muscles deflating as quickly as balloons being popped, each popping coming with a dull explosion beneath her flesh as she churned and twisted, shrinking and flattened, her clothes stirring and weaving and waving about her as they realigned and folded magically about her. It was like a reverse Sailor Moon Flash. This continued in rapid succession till a human woman with short hair and a loose fitting bell collar about her neck stood before us. With a mist of sparkling dust, a pair of glasses formed before her eyes and her now short hair was pulled back by a pair of barrettes.

“I’m ready.” *She said smoothly, and we both blinked.*

Her personality even with those two words seemed so different. Like... she was devoid of that phenomenal positive emotion and bounciness that she’d displayed so recently and the only thing left was something sterile... like a laboratory. The glasses she wore only finalized that effect.

But with a personality that was still as direct as ever, what could we do but say yes?

I was being woken up abruptly, shoved off and thrown aside to land upon my bottom with a bouncing of tits and body as I bounced a few times on my rump. Instincts made me instantly awake as I rolled to my feet with a further jostling of tits and a stirring of blankets, only to find Anhogamon on his feet looking panicky, sword in hand but still sheathed, but his other hand was fiercely gripping the pommel of the blade. He was speaking some strange language, one that I didn’t recognize, and then he saw me and... *recognition* actually floated across his eyes and he took two halting steps forward and repeated the strange words he said before.

I shook my head and splayed my hands, and he started to look panicky looking around and gripping the long mane of hair he had before shouting the same question to me.

“I’m sorry... I don’t...” his eyes widened as I spoke and he stared at me questioningly and in wonder till a soft voice spoke more words I didn’t recognize, and turning we both saw Pen entering with a Cornucopia in two hands and a pitcher in another.

Regardless, Anho calmed somewhat, but still looked anxious.

“You won’t recognize the language, Fellania. It’s been a dead tongue longer than currently recorded human history can recall. Even the ruins that would point at that language have long since been destroyed. As a matter of course, you, Sue and Madoushi destroyed the last vestiges of that civilization when Lea Monde collapsed.

“Since the time Anhogamon left us, two new proto languages have arisen in the human tongue and the Tower of Babel also happened to detract from the original purity of what humans spoke when they were new to this world. I’d assume that the crass and harsh usage of English might even sound abrasive to his ears.” Anho said something else and Pen nodded at him and replied with something else. “He’s wondering about his box. I told him I have it, it’s safe and unopened.”

I blinked, and had a memory of sitting before that box, cross legged and naked again – my first mother was apparently unabashed about her own nudity – as I looked at what was inside, using it’s writing implements and such.

“Why is it so important to be unopened?” I asked. “I... remember it being opened before.”

“Yes but its contents have changed.” Pen said and said no more about the subject as he came to me and lifting up the Pitcher and the Cornucopia to me, I accepted them before from within his robes, he pulled out objects, the first being a robe for me that he handed to me and I quickly donned with a blush... the other was a robe for Anho, a warm one lined with fur, neither of which had no possible way of fitting inside the robes of such a little guy as Pen. Taking the second robe he strode to Anho and offered it to him with a quick bow of the head and a clicking of the heels.

Anho accepted the robe and quickly swirled it around his shoulders – ooo... he looked like Auron from FF-X like that – before he nodded a quick curt nod in thanks for the warmth. Pen then gestured and rugs fluttered to the ground and with another hand Pen gestured for him to sit, and he promptly lowered into a cross-legged position with his swords over his lap before Pen gestured to me to do likewise.

Anho looked expectantly at me and I got the impression that for me not to sit would be considered phenomenally rude... and despite being topless still since I hadn't donned the robe more than hold it to my chest, I didn't even bother covering up as I sat before him and Pen took the Cornucopia and the pitcher and conjured up some plates and goblets with its magic.

“Now then... Fellania... we begin the arduous act of programming English into Anhogamon's mind.”

“Programming?”

“I assume you both would like me to cheat. Months if not years to teach English the old fashioned way can be a bother, don't you think... especially when you want to... *express* yourself to Anho as quickly as possible. I can tell you that he wants to express also, and though he's not saying anything about it... he is certainly thinking it rather loudly.”

“What... what is he thinking about me?”

“Shame on you, Fell.” Pen smirked. “You should know that hearing thoughts are one thing, but relaying thoughts of another is rather rude. You'll just have to ask him yourself.”

“How long will this take?” I blinked at him, naked breasts pressing together as I leaned forward.

“Don't know... it's a mystery.” He smirked, stating his favorite line. “But all in all, Fellania... it depends upon how receptive he is to my instruction... and really how hard he wants to speak with you.”

I am Sue.

I had to admit, Lilly was a dear to have around. Her personality shifted so drastically though when she shifted forms, and as a human she put off so little energy she actually appeared mundane to all my senses. Even Mady mentioned that she seemed remarkably unspectacular in her form. Perhaps that was a benefit; it was a wonderful guise hiding something so powerful as she was inside a container that was so mundane.

In her altered form, though, all big and fluffy as she was, she just sucked the dismay out of the room, filled it with joy and loving intent like you were in a great big padded room filled with fuzzy fluffy love. Now her personality was calm and precise, but uniquely innocent. Really innocent. I had no idea how old she was but she looked younger than me... but despite that she had the innocence of maybe a young girl that was a fraction of that age.

Suddenly... Mad and I knew what it was like to be parents. Sure this isn't what we wanted for a date night, but it was a needed experience to know what an inquisitive young woman was like. Case in point... she thought that kissing was all you needed to do to create a baby. She thought that that was sex! Great Maker... I hoped I wasn't the one that'd have to explain the penis in vagina trick.

“So what is sex then?” she asked inquisitively suddenly, right out of the blue while we were on a street corner at a street-side noodle vendor, she asking the question like a scientist might when asking questions about some experiment.

Now this was Japan... people spoke English here just as they spoke Japanese... it was a major place of business, and even a street vendor like this guy gave us an odd look.

Mad and I floundered for a bit till I took a deep breath and explained it.

“Well... when a man and a woman really love each other...”

I’ve never been stared at by one person for so long or so intently. But nonetheless, Madoushi also had to be taught about a few things, and since this was our first excursion into the world of man since our return from Lea Monde, there was so much to show. Strangely... Lilly had such an intense knowledge of these things. She used words and acronyms that I had no idea existed.

As I was explaining cars, she in turn explained something called a Wankel Engine used in certain Mazda cars, she also explained what a Catalytic Converter was and what it did and more specifically the chemical transformations that occurred therein and the exact chemical compositions of their byproducts. With a sip of a slushie she blinked and then went into a slew of its chemical compositions from just a taste... like a computer spitting out a read out of an analyzed substance.

What was more was that in the course of us walking through Tokyo, she showed off a knowledge of three different languages – German, Chinese and Japanese – switching perfectly into their accents to actually be a guide for us.

But how did a woman like this... not know anything about sex?!

“Can I watch you both have sex?” she asked as we were returning to the Shrine. We’d hit a carnival... Madoushi showed an expert’s appeal at the carnival games, and Lilly and I had a clutch of balloons and several stuffed animals apiece. When she said that though...

Madoushi choked immediately on his soda, going into a coughing fit while I blushed a very, very deep red that spread right into my breasts.

“Ah n-no. No.” I burned even brighter and she looked disappointed. “Lilly... that sort of thing is a very private act of love. Sure, some people let people watch them, but I’m not one of them, and I’m sure when he can catch his breath Madoushi would tell you the same thing.” Mad nodded vigorously while still coughing and catching his breath. “I’m sorry, we’re flattered but no.”

“But... how am I going to learn?” she pouted.

Being desperate, I tried passing the buck to the only person left in my head who I was certain would know about such things.

“Pen?” I ventured hopefully.

She blinked. “Yes... that should work.” She smiled, and then transformed in a swirling of fabric that stretched and re-knit itself into her robes instead of the slacks and shirt they’d been this whole night, and suddenly she was a very

big kitty. "Mew..." and she strode off with a metronome-like swaying of the hips and tail with a rather graceful, dancer's walk, one arm and hand holding all her prizes.

"That was horrifying..." Mad breathed.

"Yes... but you'll have to do it all over again when our daughter asks where babies come from." I mused and palmed my belly. A moment later Mad palmed my hand palming my tummy before he bent to kiss my forehead.

"You should get some rest. An expecting mother shouldn't be on her feet all day."

"How refreshing. Judging upon the time period you came from, I half-expect you to expect me to remain barefoot and pregnant in the kitchen."

Mad smirked. "You forget. I'm a tribal man. There were women from my own tribe who were physically my superior when I was... taken... from the world and sucked into Lea Monde."

"And now you can protect me from Lee's advances. I used to think no one was stronger than he is."

"Till you managed to look inside yourself and found a being stronger than him?" he asked and I chuckled.

"Possibly..." and then I pushed all his winnings for me into his arms. "I'll be right up... I crave fish."

"Another craving?" he blinked with a smirk.

"Afraid I'll get fat?" I smirked back.

"No... it's just that..." he paused and looked down.

"Hey... I'm a cat, and you're partially a cat. It doesn't mean anything. I'm just... suddenly really hungry for fish."

"Yeah..."

It was a fear. We both had it, we both shared it... it was the fear that the child growing in me was Lee's, not Mad's, and a desire for fish might mean that the baby in me was a tiger breed like Lee and not a Thylacine like Mad. If Lee was the father then he'd claim it. I... didn't know what I'd do if he tried to take my baby from me. I worried of some ultimate confrontation between Lee and Madoushi... or Lee and ME!

If he tried to take my baby then there'd be no other course of action but to kick his ass and shove his tail up it.

"I'll be right up." I kissed him on the cheek and we parted.

Smoothing my tummy in which my daughter grew, I strode into the kitchen where several very tuckered out Fairy dragons were laying on the counter panting and one or two of them were smoking cigarettes.

"Oh hell no! You are not dirtying another dish!" One lithe little female shouted at me accusingly.

"Don't worry... I won't." I smirked and opened the pantry and removed a can of tuna, and using the long nail of one thumb, cut the top of the can off like the P-tool on a Swiss Army knife.

As a human, I would've never drank the juices from a can of tuna... but I found that one of the more delectable parts of such a meal. And then fingering several mouthfuls of the fish into my mouth and sucking the juices from it, I turned and stopped dead at the broad chest that was before me, and looking up I swallowed sharply at the appearance of Lee standing before me.

"Lee..." I swallowed and then straightened my back. "Excuse me please..." and I tried to move around him but he moved to block me. "Lee... I've about had enough of you..." I said testily.

"I want to talk." He told me.

"You've had plenty of chances before now Lee." I voiced in annoyance. "I gave you more than one chance, many chances even, and with Madoushi on my arm I gave you a chance and still you can't do it. I don't even want to talk or see you any more till you can say it. Say the words, and if you can't even say that, then be silent, be invisible, and stay the hell out of my way, or so help me I'll kick your ass! And not just a light ass kicking, I'm talking about Bang! Zoom! Right to the moon Alice!"

I was getting emotional suddenly, and angry, very angry. The hackles on the back of my neck were rising and I shifted forms partially, gaining elongated elf-like ears that furred slightly with the rest of me, and I gained about twenty-five pounds and six inches as I stared up at him, my eyes were tearing up. Suddenly, one of the fairy dragons leapt up and flew away while the others hid behind, under or in pots and pans.

Myself, standing on tip toes and holding the can in one hand, I dared him to man-up to what we had together. I was shorter than he was when we were both in our human forms, and still he couldn't look me in the eye by looking down.

"I didn't think so." I said and slid around him, shoving him aside and slipping my finger and wiping up more of the tuna before sucking it off my thumb.

I'd made it several paces before I heard something that stopped me cold.

"I loved you."

The words halted me and I stopped dead, my breath catching in my throat and the tuna mid-swallow. "I found myself loving you, wanting a family, wanting children. It's not too late... we can..."

"It is too late, Lee." I interrupted. "Madoushi and I are getting married soon. This child is mine and she will go where I go."

The air seemed to crystallize with tension all of a sudden.

"And what about me? What if I'm the father? What if that child is mine? Just because you decide so you'll push me out of its life? Just like that? Just because you're the woman? I have rights as the father as well! What about my wishes?"

"If you're the father." I said and turned round to face him so fiercely that my milk-engorged breasts wobbled repeatedly back and forth before settling. "But do you think I want my daughter living in a tent without any formal education? Do you think I want to live in a tent? You speak of things like duty, well I have duties too, and a daughter's place is with her mother!"

“And what if it’s a son?”

“It’s not.” *I said simply.*

“Why?! Because that pipsqueak you call master said so?!” *Voices were rising, and Lee was baring in on me, standing over me, but I stood my ground. I wasn’t the timid little woman he’d first met. I defeated Chernavog, a greatest corrupted earth elemental. I battled against Lilith, the Queen of the Damned. I wasn’t at all timid anymore...*

“Don’t you bring him into this! This isn’t about him! This is about you and me and my daughter! I say ‘my’ because she’s mine not yours, and Madoushi is the father! At best you’re a sire, but that isn’t even clear yet! I believe in Pen’s vision of things because he hasn’t been wrong yet! He says it’s a girl then I believe it’s a girl! And you have no idea what I went through to verify that it’s a girl!

“That said you testosterone ridden freak... what if this is a girl?!” *and I folded one hand over my belly.* “Would you even care for it?! Or do you only care if it’s a son?! All that I went through sure as hell guarantees that you won’t take her from me! I won’t let you!!”

“You won’t let me?! I’m the man... you’re the woman... I dictate what’s best for the family! If I need remind you of that lesson I...”

There was a click. It was a forceful, subtle click of the butt of a staff striking the tiled floor of the kitchen. The sound attacked our minds on a subconscious level and demanded we pay attention to it. Turning we both stood and beheld Pendragon himself standing in the entryway of the kitchen, a youthful fairy dragon hiding behind his shoulder.

“Forgive me, but am I interrupting?” *he asked quietly with a raised eyebrow.*

“Stay out of this, rodent.” *Lee said sharply.* “This is a conversation that is between me and her.”

“You mean ‘her and me’” *Pen corrected Lee’s grammar.* “You always list yourself as last in a conversation, Lee. It’s polite to give honor to the other people you’re talking about first. And I agree... truly... this is a conversation the two of you should have... but not using screaming tones in the middle of the night in a Shrine of Peace. Susan... you should know better than that.”

“S-sorry Pen.” *I nodded and folded a hand over my belly as I felt my stomach squirm suddenly from the tension.*

“And Lee... you are a guest in my home. You are welcome to stay so long as you don’t continue in causing contention.” *Lee was tight-lipped.* “I’m sorry? You were about to apologize for waking my students and guests... weren’t you?”

Lee trembled and gripped his hands. “I... apologize.”

Pen nodded and approached, his gaze focusing on Lee. “Oh... and one more thing Lee... Your surface thoughts were quite open a moment ago. I was able to hear your intentions a moment ago. Were you about to strike a woman, a pregnant woman might I add, in my shrine?” *I shot a look at Lee as he stiffened.* “I see... then allow me a warning for you then Lee... there is an age-old adage: ‘Try not the patience of Dragons... for you are crunchy and taste good with catsup.’ But that’s for regular dragons... I’m a fairy dragon... the ultimate of tricksters. With us, an even older adage goes: ‘Try not the patience of Fairy Dragons, for your mind is weak and is easily broken.’”

“Yeah! And we pwn you too noob!” *the little fairy dragon on his shoulder cried out.*

“Silence you annoying little cur!” *Lee snarled and the fairy dragon cowered but Pen reached up and took the dragon off his shoulder and held him while sighing.*

“My patience has been wearing thin as of late, Lee... I have not lost my temper in the past fifty millennium and I promise you... you will not like it if I lose it.” *Pen’s knuckles were clenching around the staff, and though his head was mostly scaled and armored, there were still nonetheless patches at his temples, and I could see them throbbing. I was mad, but I dared not think of what would happen should he really loose his temper. Thoughts of Mount Fuji erupting came to mind.* “Now... since you’re acting like a child, I’ll treat you like a child. Go to your room, Lee.” *And he pointed sharply.*

Lee seemed to realize the situation he was in and seemed to stiffen even more. Pen raised an eyebrow, his eyes narrowing beneath those brows, and even Lee’s truncated bravery based on his stupid honor gave way before he slid into motion, striding passed us, but when he got to the door...

“And one more thing, Lee,” *Pen said while stroking the Fairy Dragon’s back.* “Should you ever cast the first blow in my shrine outside of a Ring of Honor, I will break whatever of you is left over after the sound thrashing you receive. Should you strike Susan, especially with her with child, most especially with her with the child she carries... the hell I will send you through will leave you an emaciated gibbering idiot by the time I finally release you from my ire, and when I return you as a wadded up ball of flesh and bone to your tribe and clan, we shall see how the honor-bound Windigo feels about his warder after I tell him the childish acts you’ve engrossed yourself within inside my home.” *And Pen stamped his staff against the floor tiles and broke one, but the tile slowly repaired itself before Pen lifted the fingers of his free hand and rubbed the cleft of the short muzzle of his nose while exhaling and Lee disappeared from the room.*

“Thank you.” *I mentioned.*

“You’re welcome.” *Came his immediate reply as he regained his composure immediately.* “Are you ok?”

“I hear that question a lot lately.” *I mentioned and began scooping tuna from the can ferociously now, but before I knew it, tears started seeping from my eyes and with a sob I slammed the can down and braced myself against the counter while the fairy dragons went and hid again.*

It was only a matter of moments before the diminutive four foot tall drake was palming the small of my back after having leapt onto the top of his staff.

“Susan...”

“I’m all right.” *I said hurriedly and tried to wipe my eyes, my mascara running.* “Damn these hormones...”

“Yes... hormones...” *Pen nodded sagely, almost sarcastically actually.*

He knew I wasn’t having a hormonal problem. I shot a look at him, seeing him smiling up at me and I couldn’t help but chuckle at him while I wiped away my tears.

“No getting past you is there?” *I sighed.*

“Nope. Let me escort you to your room.” *I merely nodded and let him guide me out of the kitchen, me snatching the can of tuna up again and devouring the rest of the tuna as he led me through the halls of his shrine.*

“How was your date night?” *he asked me suddenly.* “Was Madoushi impressed with the modern world.?”

My earlier argument with Lee forgotten in the face of tuna... I nodded and smacked my lips. “Sure. Horseless carriages, cell phones, computers, flashing lights... the whole bit. Thankfully Lilly was there to translate for us. She is just a darling...”

“Lilly went outside?!” *Pen gasped and turned me to face him.* “You took her outside?”

“Yes... is that bad?” *I blinked seeing the concern in Pen’s glowing blue eyes.*

“I... I don’t know.” *He said and looked away, cupping his chin and rubbing it with one hand.* “I... didn’t see her leave... or return.”

I looked down at him. He seemed to be mildly distraught.

“Pen... what’s the matter? What’s so special about Lilly?”

He turned to focus on me. “Sit down,” *and he gestured to a bench nearby that I sat on and he hopped up onto.* “Lilly is a very special woman.”

“Special special?” *I smirked.*

“No... I think. But... Lilly is a very, very rare sort of person. About one in a billion individuals are born like her.”

“One in a billion?” *I blinked. I thought I was unique.*

“You are unique.” *Pen said, obviously working off my surface thoughts.* “If you think about it Susan, you are the byproduct of nearly three hundred thousand years special breeding. I can assure you that that number is in the trillions. But Lilly is what some refer to as a ‘Wild Card.’”

“What? Like in Poker?”

“Similarly. It’s a reference to the entity referred to as Fate. Fate plays cards with the universe... rolls dice, that sort of thing. A Wild Card is in reference to that game of chance with Fate in which cards are involved. A tarot deck, poker cards... that sort of thing.”

“But what does a Wild Card do?”

“They... are completely invisible to any form of clairvoyance.” *Pen said, and such a thing struck me as so surprising that I actually did a double take.*

“You mean... you can’t see...” *I began and Pen shook his head.*

“A Wild Card’s actions aren’t determined in any sort of scrying. Whether that is seeing current events or seeing future events or recalling past events. Whatever mystic blessing or aberration that exists in them, whatever mutation of the flow of ether in their creation and birth, they are nevertheless completely invisible to the third eye.”

“The term ‘*Third Eye Blind*’ is in reference to them.

“It’s people like her why I cannot guarantee the results of scrying. No one can, regardless as to how powerful they are. The more directly such a person is involved in present events, the more they throw off the viewable future. I must take everything that I see in the future with a grain of salt. I have to think of how Lilly would act if she were involved in those events. Her presence throws off certain foreseeable events.

“But her being a Wild Card doesn’t end there in dictating how special she is.”

“That part about counterbalancing the world’s assholes?” *I asked and he nodded.*

“The stronger she gets the more docile she gets. You have to know that there are certain organizations that are still looking for her, Susan, the United States Government being one of them.”

“And the United States and Japan have close ties economically and militarily.” *I mentioned and Pen nodded.*

“And Big Brother, though people believe it to be a Myth, has been active since the nineteen fifties. Every camera in every major city in the world is a potential eye that can recognize Lilly, and anyone they see her with will immediately become suspect and matters of interest. The added problem is that I don’t know if they saw her. I can’t tell because of what she is. So I have to assume that we have visitors coming.”

“Visitors?” *I blinked and suddenly several of the young fairy dragons snapped into place before us dressed in black suits with black ties and white shirts wearing black sunglasses and wearing those curlicue ear buds, right before they all did some weird team pose.*

“In a word... G-Men.” *Pen said, eyeing the bunch, even as another fairy dragon dressed as Neo rushed in and started kicking the butts of the others.* “The United States Government still has very, very close ties with the Japanese Government. Enough where their government agents can practically go wherever they want to, whether or not the Japanese people understand they can or can’t.”

More and more fairy dragons were rushing into the unfolding scene of Neo versus Agent Smith from the third movie... you know... the utterly ridiculous part that they should’ve cut five minutes earlier than they did?

Pen and I watched the reenactment, Pen eyeing them for a moment or two before he spoke up.

“Alright enough. Off to bed, all of you.” *Pen said at last, which was met with a collective Aww...* “Fairy dragons like to play.” *He told me simply and got struck in the hair with a paper airplane.*

“Uh huh. So be careful when I take Lilly out. I’m sorry Pen... I must be such a burden.”

“No... don’t think that. But... if you could... I’d like to ask you a favor for tomorrow.”

“Certainly.” *I beamed.*

“Could you perhaps stand in at the gift shop? Help serve our English-speaking visitors?”

“You have a gift shop?” *I blinked, shopping instincts waking up in me and he smirked at my expression.*

“Just charms and little drums and clothes... things my students make. Plus... if any visitors from an organization come looking for you, they’ll find just a woman minding a store in a shrine. The best way to hide a thing is in plain view.”

“I can handle that.” *I smirked at last and Pen smiled at me.*

He had the cutest beaming little smile, especially when it got his antennae up.

Sue was seen safely to her room, Ba’ab’s brood was safely in bed – I hoped – and now to one final measure.

A gesture made the wall disappear and the two doors to slide open, only to reveal the interior of the broad room beneath the shrine. A storage space used to hide secret things... like what I would call a toy. But I cleared all that away to make way for a current interest... namely the ice man Anhogamon and the venerable Fellania Bloodclaw. Fellania was laying face down on the raised bed plank, sleeping, while Anhogamon...

One had to respect this Ronin... a masterless samurai before the samurai were called samurai, who sat with ankles on knees and swords across lap, with a particular book in his hand. The book was titled: ‘The Book of the Five Rings’ Written by none other than Miyamoto Musashi, the man considered to be the world’s greatest swordsman... ever.

Having only rarely seen Anhogamon use his skills more than three hundred thousand years ago, I’d nonetheless placed him within the ranks of the world’s greatest swordsmen and women of all time, right along with Miyamoto Musashi, Yagyu Jubei and Baron de Jarnac of France.

“I’d like to have met this Musashi.” *Anho mentioned in the common tongue of his time.*

“Met... or fought.” *I replied and entered further, the doors closing silently behind me.*

“Both. Our battle would’ve been legendary.” *He said and closed the book.* “My box... Master Pendragon. Do not make me force you.”

“Of course... I will go fetch it presently, Master Anhogamon... but...” *and I sat before him, balancing my staff against my lap.* “What are you going to do with it if you have it? For whom are you doing your quest now that everyone in whom you ever knew and loved is now dead?”

My words were harsh... but they needed to be. This was a tempered warrior who squelched all emotion inside himself. Oh there was passion in there all right, and if Fellania could draw it out again, she was in for a ride. But I needed his reaction... needed to see why he was still doing this.

“I was tasked with a quest, Master Pendragon... I will see it to the end.”

“Why not entrust it to someone else?”

“It was entrusted to me by the Empress herself. I will not shirk my duty.”

“‘A man without duty is not a man,’ Anhogamon?”

He looked directly at me, his stone gaze being met by my steely one. “How do you know those words, Pendragon? They were meant... for another.”

“Because Fellania... your Fellania, told them to me. She both cursed and blessed your existence right up to her dying breath. Personally, Anhogamon... I consider you to be a damned fool to place honor above family.”

“Ronin don't have family, Pendragon.”

I rocked forward and rose in an impossible way, standing on tip toe at an angle of less than forty five degrees with the floor in order to stick my face in his.

“Yes... But you did.” *I told him.* “But... now that we're talking about honor, Anhogamon... your late mate directed me to fulfill a quest too.”

“She did?”

“Yup. And I apologize in advance for this.” *And I snapped from one position to the next.*

Oh he tried to block all right, but Fairy Dragons were nothing but creatures that defied reality in every shape and form, and my blow knocked him sprawling to his side.

In the next instant there was the sound of a sword leaving its scabbard, and the long blade that Anhogamon was known to wield was brought to bare on me as I lifted my fist and kissed its knuckles before looking to him.

“Like I said... she both blessed, and cursed your name to her dying breath, Anhogamon... I'd hope for all the respect that I had for you that you wouldn't be so stubborn or so thick-headed to consider her beneath a concept as fouled as personal honor. My first lesson to you is that above all else: *'Family... always... comes first.'*”

“Now... prove to me you're not a total ass and sheathe that sword... or if your honor is so important to you, I'll put you in your place. But... after all this time, I'm certain that Fellania would hate me if I was forced to thrash you like a farmer beats the dust out of their wheat. And I'll do that to... beat the dust out of you. It starts like this,” *and I made a holding motion with all four arms.* “And you beat and you beat,” *I raised my arms and brought them down repeatedly.* “And beat... well you get the idea. Unless of course you believe in your weakened condition you can handle a great wurm fairy dragon.”

Anhogamon grit his teeth and then with a flourish sheathed his sword. The blade was absolutely fine, folded and mystically etched steel alloy, and for him to possess such a blade was – to quote another movie – ‘was like finding Moses's DVD collection.’ The wood, however, was made out of perfectly symmetric White Oak that was taken from the very core of the wood where it was at its hardest and laced with fine silk.

“Good man.” *I said and settled to a squat before him again, and clapping two hands together, bowed over them with those hands pressed over my nose, my other two hands resting on my knees.* “And now your personal healing may begin with three words that you will have to acknowledge.” *Anho lifted an eyebrow at me and settled before me with the robe I'd given him settling around them.*

“What words of wisdom do you give me, Dragon?” Anho asked.

“Simply this: *'You...were...wrong.'*”

“Enlighten me, guru... how was I wrong? Do you have any idea what my quest was about... how important it was for me?”

“You could’ve brought her with you.”

“I didn’t intend to fail... and for that matter, I didn’t intend to get trapped in a block of ice either.” *He rose abruptly and turned away from me. Normally that would be insulting in certain circles, but instead he turned to the sleeping Fellania while he gripped his sword in one hand as he folded both arms before himself.* “A wife and a child... the world was no place for either of them. I couldn’t take them with me... not where I was going.”

“And where were you going... exactly... where they couldn’t come with?” *Anho was silent and I raised an eyebrow at him.* “Sworn to secrecy were you?” *Still he didn’t answer and so I made a mockery of rubbing my chin in thought.* “Let’s see here... would it have anything to do with... a second box?” *Anho turned immediately and his eyes shifted to me with a glint of panic in them.* “And let’s see what else, what else. Would it have to do with the world tree?”

“How do you know such things?” *He said low and calm... and dangerously.*

“Because I know what’s in your box.” *And now his panic was apparent, so much so that in his panic his thumb pressed forward on the pommel of his sword, clearing the tension of the blade’s hilt from the scabbard.*

“You looked in it?!” *his voice was agonized.* “Master Pendragon... how could...”

“I did no such thing.” I replied tersely. “I can do no such thing. If you truly knew what you carried then you’d know that for me to look into the box that is in your box is impossible. Only a woman may open the vessel you carry... which is why it is sealed by the Empress’s own seal. Any warlord would have no hope of using it if they did get their hands on it and the mindset of men of the time belittled women and thought they had no purpose greater than breeding. But... some information you might not know:

“Three hundred thousand years is a long... long... time, Anho... even for me. I’d consider it the better part of my entire life. The current Bahumat is barely that old even. If you’re going to be so damned stubborn in completing your quest, then you should know what’s changed other than the myriad of languages there are out there. The English that we meticulously instilled inside your mind, though the most commonly known language in the world, is still only one of hundreds that remain in the world.”

Anho’s surprise was apparent. To one such as he, so many languages was ludicrous to think of.

“Additionally... is that the location that you are searching for... no longer exists.” *I finished.*

“What...” *he breathed, staring at me incredulously, and for good reason too... a third of a million years ago if someone were to tell me the same I would’ve disbelieved it too.*

“You search for the World Tree,” *he nodded blankly.* “She’s dead. The Dragon Midgar, per her request, devoured her, and he was murdered by the Fae Thor for the crime.”

“But how can that be? How can that possibly be if this world still lives?”

“Because she managed to have offspring. His name is Tre’Ent, and she secreted him away to a place far, far away from the reach of man, Fae or Dragon. We had to be told about him to know that he was there.”

“A *male* tree? How can a male be the absolute representation of life?”

“I don’t know... how did you manage it with your Fellania?” *I smirked sarcastically.*

“Well I stuck my... I see...” *he said and eyed me and I just smiled up at him for a moment.*

“It takes both a male and a female to procreate, Anhogamon, but a tree possesses both sexes just like any other plant. The World Tree Gaia merely chose a feminine mentality... a provider, the original Giving Tree. Tre’Ent is male... the definitive protector tree. But he was alive long, long... *long* before even I was ever hatched. Gaia produced him long before Dragon even came to the Earth. Tre’Ent likewise has had twelve other offspring... the Earth is in good hands.

“But the Loss of Gaia means that the chamber of the box has moved what it does mean is that the chamber has gone to the only place it could go... down.” And I pointed downward. “As the remains of her great trunk decayed, the chamber merely slid into the Earth into a place that is now called... Gaia’s Cradle. As Gaia’s final resting place, it still remains the source of all life on Earth, but the chamber you seek and the box that lies within now lies more than a league beneath the Earth’s surface.

“And what’s more... I know it’s *exact* location. I can even take you there.”

Anhogamon stared at me, his eyes discerning... probing. He’d spent a lifetime searching for subtle hints in an opponent’s body, and I wasn’t hiding a thing. I wanted him to ask.

“In exchange... for what?” *he asked at last.* “What do I have that I can actually give you that you can either use or even want for such information?”

“Oh... you don’t have it... or should I say *her* yet.” *I replied and made a direct display of inspecting my claws. Nonetheless, Anho turned and looked toward where Fellania still slept.*

“If I don’t have her, she’s not mine to give you, so your bargain falls apart before it even begins.” *He replied stoically.*

“Not exactly. You are under the false mindset that you are greater than a woman regardless as to her own prowess because you are a man. Time for you to wake up and be aware that in this day and age, humans practice equality between the sexes. Women can fight, and men can cook.”

“When men can bare children... then you can tell me about equality.” *I stared at him, smiling subtly and simply slowly and repeatedly blinked at him.* “What?”

“Oh nothing. Human science has just found a way for a male to gestate and birth a baby, is all.” *I shrugged. The look on Anho’s face was hilarious... eyes as wide as platters, lips pursed nice and tight, body frozen with muscle lock from sheer surprise.* “And I should perhaps also tell you that there are specific males in species that have existed since the very beginning that bore the young, not the female... the seahorse being the most famously known of them. Even the Creator Himself has deemed there be a certain degree of equality between male and female... who are you to argue with the Creator’s design?”

Anho deflated and lifted a hand hurriedly and felt his face and beard before coming back and pulling on a few strands. He scoffed then and let his hands drop.

“So you want me to bring a woman with me. You want me to stop being a gentleman and allow a woman to fight and journey with me.”

“Yes... only for you to see with your own eyes what she’s capable of, Anhogamon. Promise me that and I will return you your box in the morning... or store it if you wish... it is quite safe where it is now. And when you have your strength, I will portal you near to Gaia’s Cradle.”

“Near to. Why is it only ever near to?”

“Because the Ether of Gaia’s Cradle is the most spiritually potent place on Earth, Anhogamon. Chaos isn’t a strong enough of a term to describe what the ether is doing there. I can attempt to portal you there... but then you might wind up dropping from leagues up in the air or materialize inside solid bedrock. I can take the chance if you’re willing to...”

“Close will be fine.” *He said and raised a hand at me, and then lowered his sword and held it like a cane.* “I’m getting too old for this shit.”

“Well... for three hundred thousand years of age you look pretty good, Anhogamon. But before we end our conversation, perhaps I should take a moment to tell you of one more thing that’s changed.”

“What would that be?”

“You.”

He turned to face me, looking upon me as if I were crazy again, but then his features slowly changed. This time, I didn’t face him with humor, but rather utmost seriousness.

“Explain.”

“Again... three hundred thousand years is a long time, Anhogamon. Spirit Folk have evolved, and in order to revive you, you had to evolve as well.”

“What do you mean?”

“In your day, Spirit Folk could change between human and beast forms... a throwback from your demonic heritage, but the changes were long and arduous, often exceptionally painful, taking days or even weeks to accomplish.”

“And?”

“Spirit Folk are now called Lycanthropes... named after the wolves, or Lycan for short. Eons of evolution have allowed the transformation to be quicker... almost instantaneous and likewise more often... pleasureable.” *I gave a flourish of one hand and he raised an eyebrow at me.*

“Transformation... Into a human?” *Anho asked.* “No more... being looked down as a vagrant and a vagabond, no more denied food because I’m a monster or a mongrel, no more being denied aide...”

“Lycan hide among humans, Anhogamon.” *I finished for him.*

“Cowards...”

“Maybe... but what would you do for a better life, Anhogamon. You may be the wrong person to answer that but...”

“What do you mean ‘but’? I’ve made a very good life for myself.”

“But it could’ve been better. Why didn’t you take her with you? She would’ve broken ties with the mountain... she would’ve followed you carrying your daughter on her back the whole way. Why didn’t you see that?”

“Because!” *He shouted and Fellania stirred briefly but did not wake. Anho nonetheless quieted.* “I... would not see my mate and child walk the same path as me.

“Well there’s the result, Anhogamon.” *I said and directed a hand toward Fell.* “More than a million generations separate you from her... though she is of your progeny, there’s barely anything of you left in her.”

“But... she looks so much like Fellania... I... I thought it was really her for a moment.”

“She is... but then again she isn’t. It’s complicated.” *I waved my hands dismissively.*

“Complicated for a dragon?” *Anho asked with a raised eyebrow.*

“Regardless, we need to train you further. The English words I’ve implanted in your mind will take some doing to make your mind continue remembering them. I’ll have to use my lores repeatedly to make them stick till your mind can remember them on its own. But there is much you should be aware of. Technology is the new magic... it is a power greater than any force you’ve ever heard of. Control so fine that they can see and understand worlds within worlds, Anhogamon... and what’s more is their sciences have created weapons that you must be introduced to if you wish to be prepared for them.” *He nodded.* “And then likewise how to transform. Best we handle that first.”

“Why that first?”

“Well... so you can show your face above ground and outdoors beside the woman that you wish to call mate and wife again, really.”

“Why... I fear no human being.” *I smirked at him.* “What now you old wurm?”

“Lord Oberon... High King of the Fae... said those very words about two hundred thousand years ago. I saw him eat those words the day that a nation called America destroyed an entire city twelve leagues wide with a single weapon called a nuclear bomb. Fae can do many things, but one thing which has been and may yet always be outside of a magician’s control, even one as potent as a Fae, is control of a thing on its most base alchemical level.

“Humans not only managed that four hundred years ago through the inventions of a man named Leonardo Da Vinci, but they one-uped it too and went so far as to break those base alchemical properties that they call molecules into even baser properties called electrons, protons and neutrons. Also, recently, I’ve heard news that they’re doing it again... separating even those elements into even baser elements called matter and anti-matter. They’ve discovered a way to manipulate energy on a physical plane, Anhogamon...”

That, at least, wasn’t lost on him. It was one of the wide spread rules of magic in his time. Magic had limits... my words were telling him that science did not.

“I fear humans,” *I told him.* “I am older than their entire race, Anhogamon. I fear them, the King of the Dragons, The Bahumat, fears humans, and you can either learn to respect them like we did and hope to earn their respect... or you can fall at their hands like the Elves did, like the Fae did... like we did.” *I looked at him poignantly to drive that last statement home. We dragons were considered the ultimate of species on earth in his time. If humans could manage to split the atom and overcome a species like us... there was no limit to them.* “Unlike me... you are actually considered one of them. So you can either try to blend in, or you can go out looking like what they’d call a monster and a freak, be hunted, imprisoned and then dissected to satisfy their curiosity.”

Chapter 4: Training

I'd not gone topless for so long in my life and not cared about the matter.

Waking up, rising slowly with my chest lifting long after I did, rubbing the sleep from my eyes, I turned to find Anhogamon awake. Pen was here, sitting atop his staff as I turned onto my side, muscles rippling with every little movement I made, tits rolling and wobbling before I yawned and rose to sit, stretching long and wild. Arms lifted and body stretching, even sitting I could scrape my fingers against the ceiling in here... I was that big in bear form.

But then within moments I was breathing a little harder as my loins expanded, their insides unfolded and I grew so erect nipple-wise in the cool air of the cellar that I moistened immediately before groaning. Damn this heat. Damn it, damn it, damn...

And then I stopped, suddenly feeling eyes on me, and lifting my head I saw Anho looking upon me with Pen flicking one of his long hooded ears.

I had to sit with legs apart, knees near my shoulders with arms and chest between them. Right now the only thing upon me that hid my nakedness was a white, currently translucent from moisture, stretched panty that adhered to the contours of my loins to show off in wonderful clarity its every contour. It was a garment set for a human woman not a giant bear... so currently it was little more than a G-string with its hip straps stretched nice and long. Fuzz from pubic fur splayed over the lip of that garment while the seat split my large rounded and supremely muscles bottom right in two before tucking beneath my powder puff tail.

I was aware of this state, aware that I was nearly naked, aware that I had their eyes on me, but I was looking to Anhogamon who gazed upon me. His blue-gray eyes, like cold, tempered steel, holding mine made me even more aroused than I already was. He wasn't looking at just my tits, or my sex framed by arms and legs, or my face... he was looking at all of me, the whole of me, taking me in. He didn't smile but he didn't frown either... I took that as a good sign. From what I could remember of him, he hardly smiled... but did often frown.

But the glimmer in his eyes, the shine, the light in this shaded area, shimmered as he looked upon me and didn't look away.

I was presented for a moment to lean back and peel those sopping wet panties off my loins, let him see my sex directly, and hopefully Pen would get the idea to get out of there when my white knight, my noble samurai, rose from where he sat, put his sword away and ravished me just like a...

"Um... I... could use some morning tea." I blanched and blushed so deeply as my thoughts started getting naughtier and naughtier.

"I am feeling a bit peckish myself." Pen mentioned. "But perhaps some appropriate clothing first." And he gestured to the discarded robes that were left over from last night and they rose and slid through the air before landing in my awaiting arms.

I noted that they were the red and white of a Shinto Priestess or Shrine Maiden. As I put them on, presently they clung like a second skin over me except in the arms where they were slightly baggy, but standing up, nearly coming to the ceiling as I dressed, I noticed that Anhogamon's eyes lifted slightly... still watching me. Perhaps I delayed in dressing then, not wanting to allay his desires. I flexed as I stretched, I arched in my best sensual ways... I never really tried being openly sexy, but I wanted him... every mote in my being wanted him, and my loins ached at the moment for his cock, my womb for his seed, and I exhaled a groan and a sigh as if he'd just penetrated me – the

tricks my loins were doing in my heat definitely made me feel that way – before I meticulously began to enclose the robes about me layer by layer.

Anho rose then, and I found that I towered over him... more so than even my first mother remembered. She must've been shorter than me in her time, that or her memories in my head are askewed in some places... but nevertheless, I considered what it'd be like to embrace him. With his height... my breasts could frame his head if I pulled him to me, embraced him. Heaven knew I wanted to leap across the room in a graceful ballerina bound and collapse at his feet, professing my undying love for him.

Great Maker... I was like a love-sick teen!

Regardless... he was a proper man, and I was a proper woman, and as such I bowed before them, folding hands over my lap... well over my sex really, trying to still it. I definitely towered over the diminutive Pendragon.

“Thank you Master Pendragon for these fine clothes.”

“You're welcome.” He replied simply as I rose, and as procession dictated, it was master then guest then shrine maiden. This way was what Anho was familiar with, I wanted him to feel at home, wanted him to like me.

It was probably best that I was in the back anyways... I was starting to perspire. Perspiration carried my pheromones, let others, especially males, know that I was in heat. Instincts in those receptive to it would wish to placate me so that their seed could impregnate me... but... no man... absolutely no man would seed this body other than my Anho.

Regardless... I was getting energetically aroused to the point where all I could think about was making love to Anho no matter how hard I tried to clear the thoughts from my head. Daydreams mixed with memories and they only made me perspire more, and I breathed more deeply, moistening between my legs till...

“OK!” Pen announced and clapped his hands together, disrupting my thoughts. “Time for us to go upstairs at long last, have some breakfast and introduce Anhogamon to the rest of the shrine. Fellania... if you could please lead us?”

Pen... what are you doing?! I thought as loud as I could, but he just beamed up at me as I tentatively took the lead.

I was about as self-conscious as if I'd just farted and suddenly my host wanted me to walk to the front of the line, and I was about to carry that odiferous scent right along with me... but in this case it was trailing a cloud of my pheromones. Though I glared at him as I passed, Pen winked and me and I blinked. Suddenly I realized that Pen was doing this for my benefit...

On the one side, it forced Anho to smell me, and if he truly was my first mother's lost love, he, above all people, would be the most receptive to the scent of the heat wafting off me. It might work like any aphrodisiac...

On the other side Pen's action separated us, made it so that I couldn't see Anho so that my mind could wander as much as it was.

But then there was the edge of the coin. Anho was the sort of warrior that expected his women to walk behind him as he walked... now he was having to follow a woman. It would strike his sensibilities, but then... how long would I last if I were always asked to be the dainty type? Pen was breaking his age-old habits before they had a chance to solidify over me.

The more I thought about it, the more it made sense to me.

Regardless... Pen kept a respectful distance with Anho as I merely nodded and led the way up. After showing Anho a seat and I went to go get the food, Pen accompanied me to the food trays that were being serviced by Bob, Poon and their brood, all unnecessarily wearing hairnets and food-stained smocks. Poon was noisily chewing gum like a woman just out of high school but not yet in college with that lackluster way of acting some did when they knew they had to do a crap job to make ends meet. It was all an act I supposed... but I couldn't help but think Poon's gum-chewing was like her chewing cud.

"Thank you for that." I mentioned quietly to Pen.

"You're welcome... but I should mention that he was watching your behind the whole way. Maybe you should sway your hips more... he might be an ass man."

I glanced at Anho and blushed as his gaze suddenly moved from my back to his tea as he drank from it. "I think... he gets to look at my butt. He could stare longingly at anything he wants to stare at for that matter." I smirked impishly, right as Pen placed a hand bowl on my tray and placed a tea dipper in it. I didn't even have to ask what kind of tea it was.

"Drink this quickly... it's too soon anyways after all."

I blinked and then looked to him as he slid down his staff and began walking away.

"Too soon for what?"

"You'll see..." he said merely and gestured a wave over his shoulder and I grumbled to myself, finishing up with getting the foods I wanted before returning to Anho.

He was perfectly at home when I returned, and setting down a tray with an assortment of foods, he thanked me and immediately started to dish himself up rice and roasted eel using a pair of chopsticks that were quite at home in his nimble fingers.

I immediately poured tea water for myself and then paused. "Water?" I managed and he nodded, holding up his teacup in which naked leaves were within, and I genially poured him water before he drank expertly with one hand.

My loins were throbbing for want, moistening as the perspiration wafted from between my breasts and from the insides of either sleeve from them coming from my arm pits as well as up from my bust as the concentration line of sweat on a woman between her breasts grew wet with sweat. I had to fight the urge to spread my legs right then and there and give him a lap dance, and I felt myself swooning as I took up the cup of calming tea and drank from it deeply from it, holding it with one hand and cupping it with the other, draining it before pouring more water. The warmth cooled the fire in my loins.

"You smell like her." He mentioned quietly then as I began my second cup, and I turned immediately toward him. "Like master Pendragon said, you are her... and then again you're not."

I swallowed and devoted my attention to him as he cupped his tea bowl in one hand and held it steady with the other.

“I...” he began again and then stopped, drinking and then placing his cup down.

“What?” I asked when he didn’t say more.

“Nothing.” He said at first, but then. “She... I mean you... move like her. Smell like her, sound like her...” he drummed his fingers. “She was the first woman who I knew of that could hold her own in a battle... using only a staff. She was the only woman I knew of who could... match me.”

“I’m not bad with a staff myself.” I told him. And he nodded curtly, not looking at me... or so I thought. The way his head was positioned, he could easily focus on my cleavage from the corner of his eye without directly looking at it.

“I would like to test that.”

“I would be glad to.” I smiled, and sighed and felt my heart beat a little quicker before I felt something leap up onto my back with a slapping motion.

“You want sex~...” A fairy dragon began to hiss in my ear amidst giggling laughter and I flicked him off quickly while grinning at Anho still.

“We can... begin after breakfast.” And there was another slapping motion.

“Sex~!” and this time I caught the little bugger in my hand and held him there.

“Pendragon has asked of my presence so he may teach me a few things about this new world of yours... and other than it seeming more civil, more equal... I’ve yet to see anything too radically different.” And he sipped his drink. “Pendragon’s shrine has indeed improved since I was last here. It has the feel of a tea house in the Empress’s palace.”

I looked upon him almost pitying, remembering the sort of culture shock it was for Madoushi who’d come back from only a few centuries of separation. Anho was hundreds of eons gone.

“Anho... would you like to see something with me?” I asked him and for the first time he turned to regard me, looked up at my face, and for a moment, a bare moment, there was a flicker in his eyes, a flicker of longing, and his lips pursed for a moment inside his stone-emotionless features.

“I would like that.” He replied at last and set his cup down, and fluidly rocked forward and back again to his feet and offered me a hand up. Me. I was taller sitting than he was standing, but nonetheless, he was strong... strong enough to be at least a brace to help me rise. I could rise like him, but he was trying to be a gentleman in helping me rise... I intended to let him.

“This way.” And still holding the fairy dragon in one hand, I guided him by the hand upward to the tallest tier of the shrine, the meditation room. Once there, I led him to a window... and pushed it open.

The shock on Anho’s face was more than apparent as he just let his hands fall limp and he walked toward the window and stared out at the city streets of Tokyo Japan just beyond the spacious grounds of the shrine on the edge of the city.

Tokyo was a city said to be at war with itself. A city that contained the ultra modern, more modern than even most U.S. cities, but Tokyo also contained the ancient and traditional. Pen's shrine was an example of the later of these two. Ancient thousand year old shrines could be found tucked close to impeccably towering skyscrapers dozens of stories tall, the tallest of which was a staggering three hundred and thirty three feet tall. To Anhogamon, who'd never seen anything taller than perhaps something like Edo Castle or Kyoto Palace, to see a structure of concrete and steel as tall as a skyscraper...

None of my first mother's memories ever spoke of a single moment in which she'd seen Anho express so much emotion. To see such wonder on his face as I stepped forward and looked out at Tokyo nestled within twenty miles of the base of Mount Fuji.

"H-how... what supports them?" he asked and looked out over the city that stretched on straight to the horizon in every direction before that window. "So many people. How do they tolerate each other?"

"More than twelve million people in that city alone." I replied, feeling the fairy dragon squirming and licking the inside of my hand to get out.

"Does the population of the world reside here?" he gasped.

"Not quite." I laughed and moved behind him, placing my fist with the dragon in it and my bare hand upon his shoulders. "There are six and a half billion people in the world." My nipples hardened till they ached the moment they pressed against his back, and I quietly exhaled a sigh. His scent was alluring, strong... preserved in memory and verified from it having been frozen to him for so many hundreds of eons.

Just then, there was a roar and he looked around and then up, and gaped at a jumbo jet rising from the ground.

"I must see this world." Anho said at last with the strongest determination I'd ever heard in a voice. "Pendragon will teach me to become human today!" And he turned and I blinked in surprise as he left with such purpose.

Human? He can be a human?

And then I felt the dragon squirming in my hand and I opened it to look down at the little bugger as he blinked up at me with his extra wide eyes.

"Well?"

"Sex~!" he hissed and giggled and rolling my eyes I turned, opened my palm and flicked him.

"Ah! My DI~ICK!" he screamed as his body zipped through the air out the top window of the shrine, and he did a beautiful arch that landed him in the Koi pond before I shut the window on him.

But human? Anhogamon... as a human? Impossible. Anho was no Lycan.

But... Pen said that he'd have to change. Did he have that ability now?

It was my tummy gurgling that woke me, and opening one eye I found myself laying face first – more or less, big boobs didn't allow a woman to really lay face first – on a pillow, arms sprawled forward while my lover rested

behind me, that big sausage of his unslung from his penis pouch and resting flaccid between my legs. Sweat and love juices were crusted all over me as I awoke, and I realized that I was chewing a wet soggy spot into my pillow with my drool.

I'd had a lot of aggravations last night from my encounter with Lee... and to punish Lee I had had mad torrid love making with Madoushi. He got me to pass out again in the middle of sex.

"Oh you mad man you..." I murred and then groaned, rubbing my head as I slowly moved out from under him, but only got caught by his arms as he embraced me tighter and kissed my bottom repeatedly... the beginnings of more lovemaking. "Oi. Lover... Pen needs me." I groaned and then rose, feeling my tummy rumbling again and several pangs of craving-induced hunger hit me.

Stuffing a tit into my mouth and drinking the vanilla-like cream from it as I continued to wake up, feeding the craving in me for my own milk – go figure that I'd crave that – I slowly rose and switched tits amidst showering. Stretching the kinks out and washing the remains of lovemaking off, I exited, primped and preened like only a cat could, pet Mew on my way to the dresser holding all my clothes, and paused amidst opening the drawer when I saw a set of clothes laying on top of it. Taking the top layer, I almost squealed with glee at the shrine maiden's garb. The socks, red pants, white shirt, hair tie... everything was here!

All of a sudden I found myself going into geek mode as I imagined myself becoming like Rei from Sailor Moon, only I was a lot more muscular and phenomenally much bustier.

But I looked cool!

Gonna have to ask Pen if I could keep these.

"Oi kitty." A voice said and I turned to see Ivan rising from under a mound of pillows. "You are lovely I must say. And the thin clothing with no under panties? Japanese know how to dress their women."

"Hush you, Ivan. This is traditional."

"Oh is that what they call it? I thought it was called going commando" and he slid from within the pillows and stretched, yawning. "But is good. You don't see me wearing underpants."

"That's called free balling it, Ivan." I smirked and he immediately lifted a leg. "No... this is free balling." And he started licking himself.

"If you were just a cat I'd understand you doing that in front of me, but since you're not... EW!"

Ivan came up with his tongue partially hanging out before he licked his own mouth. "Ah yes. The old complaint with cat's giving themselves baths. Look here Sue... I do it to be clean. Humans would do it to make love to their faces... so bless the Great Creator for making humans unable to do this little trick."

"I can do it... if I'm hybrid."

"I know. But you don't do it to be clean." And he went back to licking himself.

"You brat." I mused and then went to kiss Madoushi good morning on the cheek before leaving.

Lovemaking every morning and night didn't count today...

... We did it all night till the morning anyways.

Pen had asked me to help him with the Shrine's shop... Just a cash register job to help the existing staff with the English speaking customers. I thought it was going to be a light work sort of thing... something to pass the time while looking at the beautiful crafts the shrine produced in the form of Japanese Memorabilia like handmade and painted tea bowls, specially made charms – I took a pendulum with a pretty crystal and paid for it from my own pocket – but I learned a lesson that day that I didn't think I'd ever have to learn:

Sometimes... tourists and sight seers... could be real assholes.

"I don't believe this. You don't even have a credit card machine?!" the highly American tourist with the balding head was practically shouting at me.

The poor shrine maiden who barely spoke English was practically in tears by the time I took over.

"I'm terribly sorry sir, but this is a shrine. Elements of technology aren't used here. We are very far from the city proper, and the shrine master believes that technology interferes with the spirit of his shrine." I was saying pleasantly, holding my hands and alternatively palming and stroking my belly. The negative spirit from this guy was upsetting my daughter.

"Bull shit! This is such a backward country. Despite that we conquered you, I can't believe each and every one of you don't even speak English, for God's sake you bunch of godless heathens. Why did you have to take over? Why couldn't that little harlot in the corner speak with me? At least the Germans got the presence of mind to speak our damned language when we conquered them!"

What a stupid, foolish man. If he was going to yell at us at least he should get all his facts right. It made me ashamed to be an American out of sheer association with this prick.

"If the problem is a credit card, we do have a credit card swiper. If you'll just..."

"Silence you overbearing wench. Disgusting looking woman. So much muscle on one woman? It's disgraceful! No woman should be built like you. I should tell you if I were your father, the moment you started to... to... lift weights and grow stronger than a man, I would've taken you over my knee and started whipping sense into you with my belt!" It's hard to grit your teeth and smile at the same time. "And those breasts of yours! What are you a cow?! Now ring up my purchases for my wife and children and I can get the hell out of this damn unsatisfying resort of yours as soon as we possibly can."

And in that moment, something fast zipped from across the room and slapped noisily against the man's head, and there was Bob head-hugging the side of the man's head, and by head hugging, I'm talking about an Alien Crab Face-Hugger maneuver, but instead of his mouth, in this case it was the man's ear.

"Sa-LUNK!" he grinned and reached down where I couldn't see... all I heard was an unzipping sound before Bob began to hump the man's head. "Oh yeah... you like that don't you bitch?!"

I stood there staring wide-eyed, watching the fairy dragon hump this man's... ear?!

“Miss?! Oh for crying out loud! Did all that muscle squeeze the sense out of your brain?! My card!” *I absentmindedly took it while staring at Bob.*

“Oh yeah... oh yeah! Give me good helmet... that’s right... oh... oh...” *Bob said in the moaning throws of someone nearing orgasm.*

“What are you staring at?” *the man asked and I shook myself into looking at him, smiling impishly.* “I’m terribly sorry sir... something distracted me.”

“Typical woman...” *and he lifted a hand to work a pinkie in his ear. Bob immediately rose and twisted away from me, thank the maker, so I didn’t have to his naughty bits.*

“Oh yeah... oh yeah... finger yourself nice and good bitch. Do it... yeah... daddy loves it when you’re so bad to yourself.” *I absentmindedly ran up the items and swiped the card as the man finished cleaning his ear and Bob immediately plugged the ear up with what I could only assume to be a phallus before he started humping the man’s head again.* “Oh... yeah... take it!” *And Bob began slapping and knocking the man’s head with his fist.* “Who’s a bad boy?! You are! You’re a bad boy! Fuck you! I’m gonna... I’m gonna... oh... oh... eee... GEEEE-HEEE! Take it all!” *and Bob shuddered and I spasmed with surprise and almost spilled out of the white and red robes I was wearing as Bob made the full-body spastic motions of a climaxing male... only sillier.*

“Your purchases sir.” *I said, handing the man his things and card back.*

“About damned time. I will be writing a letter to my consulate about the shoddy work here.”

“Sure you will bitch.” *Bob smirked and made a show of zipping up a nonexistent fly before hopping down onto the countertop as the man turned around and made off.* “But you give good ‘head!’” *he called after the man as he and his family left, and in the meantime Bob lit a cigarette and began to smoke it.*

“Bob!” *I hissed once the man was out of – ahem – earshot.*

“What... I was doing you a favor.” *He smirked and drew on his cigarette deeply, and I blinked as the cigarette burned rapidly down to ashes which he caught in one hand and then sniffed them like one would sniff snuff. The shrine maiden was giggling uncontrollably.*

“How... on earth... did he not feel that?” *I asked him.*

“Oh he felt it all right, but thanks to the proficient use of Glamour, A Fae’s and most especially a Fairy Dragon’s best friend, what he did catch on was purely on the subconscious level. So I predict that within the next hour he’ll begin suffering feelings of acute violation and start crying for what he thinks is no reason. The next few weeks will be punctuated with dreams of said violation that will likewise make him more paranoid than he already is. He’ll spend a fortune on head-shrinkers to figure out why he’s feeling such actions, and though some repressed memories and/or feelings may be uncovered they’d have no chance on putting the finger on a wee little fairy dragon... who just FUCKED YOU IN THE EAR, BITCH!” *He yelled that at the man as they were leaving the gate and he suddenly shook with what appeared to be the willy-nillies.*

“You’re insane.” *I blinked at him.*

“Thank you. And remember,” *he lifted a finger for punctuation.* “Should you ever go fairy dragon... you’ll go deaf. Now if you’ll excuse me...” *he whipped a cloth from out of nowhere and tied it around his neck as one of his brood*

popped out of nowhere with a fan to blow that cloth about like it were a cape. "...I have more places to destroy and more assholes to do." And he whipped a pinwheel out and held it into the fan so that it'd spin for a bit before he dropped the fan and leapt away with a barbaric yawp, falling straight to the ground face first with a slap, ripping the cape off before gallivanting out the shrine shop's door.

"He is so queer..." the shrine maiden managed to tell me in her broken English, queer being a word for strange, and I just nodded while the broodling started to talk into the fan to hear his voice distorted back at him.

How is it that I've become so fascinated with this man that I've never met until recently, I asked myself as I watched Anhogamon training directly with Pen.

Pen was teaching him about bullets... using peanuts. Despite that Anhogamon came from a time before recorded time, his reflexes were nonetheless impeccable... even to deflect super propelled peanuts shot at him by Pen flicking or blowing them off his palm. It was like that superman movie with Richard Pryor where superman is flicking peanuts and breaking bottles in that bar, only in this case, my Anho – I sighed at the thought of calling him *'my Anho'* – was deflecting or cutting the flicked peanuts with his sword.

He was so small in comparison to me, and yet he was so quick, so rosy, so powerful... a feral, chaotic creature ordered into what I'd call the ultimate man. So what if he was only a little bigger than four feet tall? This was a warrior, a white knight, a samurai more ancient than the nation that had supposedly created them. Anhogamon was a proto-samurai... the first of his kind.

And Anho was a proud warrior, and everything about him, even the happenstance that he was born what was originally called a Spirit Folk and was now called a Lycan, a species that was looked down upon in his time because they weren't considered human and were instead considered demon spawn, Anho had embraced that element to himself as a thing of pride. He wore his moniker proudly, he was a Spirit Folk, and anyone who spoke down upon him because of his size and because of his fur got taught a lesson in humility.

Pen was now rapidly flicking peanuts at Anho, simulating the speed of an Uzi or an assault rifle, in which Anho was twisting and bending his sword before him and was actually deflecting all of those projectiles.

I sighed again...

But now he had to hide amongst men like Sue and me like nearly everyone in this shrine had to. He had to learn of the Accord, the treaty between all lycanthropes to hide from humans, and he was taught of the reasons why, the Wolfman outbreak centuries ago being the principal reason of them all.

We Lycan had witnessed the potency of the Hunters, humans specially trained to hunt and exterminate – not kill, humans are killed, monsters are exterminated – and we immediately feared the humans and their arts... most especially the most notable of all the Hunters, the venerable Van Helsing.

"You're doing far more remarkable than I thought you'd be doing Anhogamon." Pen mentioned and threw a mouthful of peanuts into his mouth and chewed them up. A moment later he blew a peanut butter bubble like others would blow bubblegum... however he did that I may never know... all I knew was that it looked gross.

“I’ve encountered similar attacks.” Anho mentioned and with a snap and an expert sheathing of his sword, he squatted and knelt before Pen. “Now... teach me to be human. I want to see this modern world with my own eyes and not through one of those strange scrying glass I was shown called a *‘television.’*”

“There’s a television in my shrine?” Pen blinked and then looked up for a moment. “I see... I have some brood to punish.”

Technology wasn’t allowed in his shrine. The *‘twisted magic’* of technology, as Pen and many other magic-users called human science, created a bad-vibe with his shrine.

So now I watched Anho learning how to become human while Pen sat across from him on a slightly raised platform so that they could look at each other eye-to-eye... I didn’t know why. Pen was about Anho’s size anyways. . Soon a large cat, a light brown and purple Persian kitty, entered and hopped up to Pen’s lap, pawed at his legs and then turned before curling up there. I blinked, remarking immediately that that lithe Persian had the same coloring as that Lilly Jade person. Pen merely lifted one of his four hands to pet her.

Lilly had been Pen’s example to Anho as to what a Lycan could do now. Anho was most impressed in the radical size differences that Lilly could accomplish... from a lithe, easily ignorable woman in her early twenties, to a tall fem easily as muscular as I or Sue was, to a tiny little almost kitten like Persian cat.

And now I sat with a certain degree of anticipation as Anhogamon attempted for the very first time to utilize the necessary muscle and mental control to shift forms.

“Think of it as a meditative thing.” Pen was saying. “It’s a combination of will as well as muscle control. A man such as yourself, I can assume the muscle control part will be child’s play, but you’ve lived your entire existence as a fur, you turned derogatory statements into prideful titles, your strength is based on the fact that you were a Spirit Folk and the rest of the world can go soak their collective heads.”

“Get out of my mind, Pendragon.” Anho growled.

“In your mind nothing, that’s semantics. I know you well enough to discern that without mind-reading, Anhogamon. You are prideful, and I must remind you that you were so prideful that you considered personal honor above your new mate and newborn daughter. That’s a dick move, Anho, and the majority of people you will meet now will tell you it’s a dick move, and as the Creator prompts us: *‘Out of the mouths of two or three witnesses shall the truth be made known.’* Now that you’re aware of your pride, and you are aware of what blockage is before you, you will now have to show yourself the blockage and let your will move around it.”

“I cannot see that as a blockage, Master Pendragon.”

“Then look at it as an obstacle. You need not stop being proud of your heritage, Anho, but you must be aware of a danger.”

“What danger is that?”

“If you go walking outside amongst people looking as you do, immediately you will have six and a half billion opponents. Are you aware of the meaning of this number?”

Anho sighed and bowed his head. “I’m aware of it.”

“Every time you go out amongst people, Anho, it is a mission of stealth. You must hide in plain sight... or you will die a slow and painful death as they dissect you for no reason greater than just curiosity. Humans are the most proliferate race in history... their numbers have thrice over outnumbered Dragons, Fae and Elves combined. Even cataclysm doesn't stop them for long. This and other reasons are why we hide from humans... why all creatures of magic left in the world must hide from them. Human curiosity is a dangerous thing to us, and we've survived for millennia in secret because humans do not know about us.”

“Why is curiosity so dangerous?” Anho asked quietly.

“Spoken like a true cat.” Pen smirked. “It is dangerous because they explore and discover before they realize whether or not they should.

“The moment they become aware of us, governments and organizations will fund great amounts of money to capture you, dissect you, and use the secrets in your blood to empower themselves. There is practically no place on Earth that you'll be able to hide... not even my shrine.”

“That... puts it into an appropriate perspective.”

“It's the same perspective that has served the Lycan for countless eras, Anhogamon: Survival.”

And with Pen's instruction Anho began to concentrate. My excitement rose, I wanted to see this, it became an utmost imperative in my day that day as he struck a meditative pose with back straight and legs crossed. The culture he knew was an amalgam of Asian Philosophies... Japanese being the principal source of them all. Tao, Chi, Chakra and so on were concepts that were second place to him, so beginning with controlled breathing he settled, he thought and concentrated.

“Begin with the fur, Anho,” Pen said softly then. “They retract into your pores with a prickling sensation, slowly sliding into your body, leaving only your head and facial hair.

And slowly yet surely, I watched as that hair began to wave and ripple, and then thin...

“Your body can house these traits, hold them inside, keep them safe from sight. This is a new power for you, Anhogamon... it's yours to have and to hold and is inalienable. You went through eons of imprisonment in ice to obtain it, now take it!”

And with a sound like someone slowly inhaling through their teeth, all of Anho's fur finished retracting. I dared not move, but I wanted to see his face... but then Pen apparently wasn't done.

“Next are the traits of your feline breed. The whiskers... just like the fur... they can be retracted.” And the long, firm wires of a cat's whiskers retracted slowly till they disappeared from my view. “The next requires imagination, Anho. Will yourself to be human, ears migrate lower, they aren't hooded nor are they pointed, they are rounded and on the sides of the head instead of the top.” His head began to change, and I saw the ears retract. “Humans don't have muzzles, they have noses and mouths... push the muzzle into the face and then the face backward into the skull slightly, recessed into the face till the lips and nose are flush with the face. Good... the nose tip isn't black, but flesh colored and bent forward instead of flush with the face. More... More... there we go.

“Now... one final step, and in this you must let yourself simply slip the rest of the way your form is lighter, thinner, slight of body. Your body wants to change at this point... just keep thinking that you are a human and the rest of you will just slip into it so long as you relax now.” And Anho gave an abrupt teeter to the front and back. “That isn't

relaxing.” Pen smirked, but nonetheless, about fifty pounds just sloughed off my Anho... “Now let go, relax, exhale...” Anho exhaled. “Good! Now tuck the tail inside you, retract the claws and make them fingernails. Perfect! And on the first go. Just as I expected for a master such as yourself to accomplish.”

“You were right... my mind refused... to...” and he stopped and felt his throat. His voice was slightly higher-pitched and I fidgeted, wanting to see his face.

I moistened from the sound of his voice, and biting my lower lip I cupped the fronts of my chest as my nipples hardened till they ached and began to exude a little milk. His voice did strange things to my head, and this dimmable heat wasn't helping. My hips gave an involuntary rock as I briefly imagined him penetrating me.

Pen was nodding to Anho as his eyes flickered to me. “Would you prefer to look into a mirror or let your new human form be judged by a beholder?”

“Why would a fleshy ball of eyes judge me best?” Anho gasped and Pen smiled and held up a hand briefly before lowering it to pet a napping Lilly.

“Sorry. It's a saying now, Anhogamon. *Beauty lies within the eye of the beholder,* meaning that the measurement of your comeliness depends and changes based upon the perception of the person who is looking at you at the time. I only ask because there is a willing recipient sitting no more than ten feet away from you.” And Pen gestured to me.

It was a reflex I knew... when you gesture to something a person's reflex was to look at it. Pen did it for my benefit so that I could look upon him, and he did. Immediately I felt my heart do a summersault at the sight of that face, the angled eyes, the hard feline features that still permeated his face, and my heart then paused in its beating, and then tumble about for a moment or two while my lips pursed in wonder at the... totally *hot* looking Anhogamon! I sighed and smiled broadly at him, feeling stupid in the head as I looked upon such a beautiful, beautiful man.

Daniel Craig, Johnny Depp, Jason Statham and Fabio be damned... *this*, my Anho, was the sexiest man alive.

“She swooned... there you have it... you're a heart-breaker, Anhogamon... though if I might suggest... a trim, maybe a shave?” Pen managed and gestured toward his own face. “We can work on facial sculpting and facial hair control later, but methinks that with a little pruning... you'll be an absolute heart-breaker.”

“I already am a heart-breaker.” Anho mentioned, watching my reactions for a few moments longer before returning to Pen.

“I mean without your sword.” Pen smirked.

“I've never groomed myself past cutting facial fur that's gotten too long, Master Pendragon. Do you have any suggestions?” he asked and my thighs pressed together for want of this man inside me. Oh I can't take it any longer! His voice! His Looks! Mph! The panties I wore were soggy, the chest wraps moistening with my sweat as my hips rocked repeatedly.

Come to me my sweet lord... let me pleasure you with my sexual power and...

“Certainly...” Pen said as he flickered an eye toward me and I stopped. “I'm sure we can find someone who can teach you some of the basics. Forgive me if I don't show you... but a million and a half years old and I've never grown a beard. Go figure... maybe I just lack the level of testosterone or something. Now excuse me while I go take care of something. Fellania will you please come with me?”

“Hm? What?!” I blinked, not wanting to leave that spot, and I looked about for Pen, finding him rising and approaching me with Lilly cradled in his lower pair of arms.

“Your help... please come with me? I require your assistance.”

“Um...” I wanted to say hell no. I wanted... I wanted... but then Pen was taking my hand and pulling, and I had no choice but to follow. He was surprisingly strong for such a little bugger.

But he led me into the hall and sat me down on the nearest bench, and pulling a vial from somewhere, only the Maker knows where, I hoped it was from his robes and not his fanny like Bob seemed to do, he provided me with a clean linen handkerchief.

“Moisture is gathering on your chest and face, Fellania. I can smell the pheromones from across the room.” He told me and I took the handkerchief and dabbed at the sweat on my supple flesh as he sat next to me, still cradling Lilly in his arms. “What do you think? Other than the swooning and the perspiring and the heaving of the chest and the moistening of the...”

“Hush. And stop paying attention to those things.”

“I notice those things... I don't pay attention to them. If I paid attention to them then you'd find me in places you don't want me to be.” And then his little hand palmed my muscular arm. He was so small it was like a child's hand, but then Anho was his size. How would Anhogamon seem to me? My child mate? “Fellania... do you need something stronger? Your heat seems to be escalating in his presence.”

“I-I'm ok...”

“Now you are.”

“Quiet you. I'm just... I just...”

“Need a good fucking?” he asked and I turned with a growl at him. He was smirking with me with a raised eyebrow before he finally deflated.

“Yes! Ok? All right? You got me. Yes I want him. I want him inside me in a bad way but... I don't know. Before a few days ago he was just a remembered memory, a dream... and now there he is as real as day! I can hear him, I can touch him...”

“You can meat gaze and judge exactly how big his penis can erect...” Pen said slyly.

“I do not!”

“You do too. And it isn't subtle.”

I opened my mouth to argue, but then exhaled a long sigh and slumped over myself, breasts pressing against knees. “I hate being in heat.” I grumbled.

“You hate it because you’ve not yet had a pleasant one. But I will have to admit... this one seems to be lasting longer than a normal heat for some reason. You should be done with it by now. I wonder what’s keeping it active. We could stop the tea, try something else...”

“No... I’ll control myself.” I told him and then stood up; pulling the kimono-like robe further shut about the ample bosom I had and folded my arms to hide the super erect teats and areola I had. “Now if you’ll excuse me, while you’re... *pruning* Anhogamon... I think I’ll go take a frigid bath... right after I raid your icebox for some ice.”

“You’ll find the ice already prepared for you. We refrigerated some milk quart boxes filled with water... they should be quite frozen by now.” Pen said and slid off the bench before walking off with Lilly, her tail wagging lazily while even from this distance I could hear her purr.

I am Anhogamon.

Bobcat Spirit Folk, now a Lynx Felis Lycan. Humans and their damned need to name everything. To categorize and to name things, and if you didn’t have a name, especially a proper name, then you weren’t worth their while. A blood name was everything... so in their eyes, the bastard nameless son of demon spawn that I was made me less than a vagabond... even despite that time and time again I proved myself to be better than any samurai for any royal court.

The Empress Panda was the only one who ever treated me like an equal... before Fellania that is.

The Empress asked... she asked for my presence... sent a hand maiden to me instead of armed guards, and on her knees, the Empress asked me kindly, using the word ‘please’ even... to do a quest for her. Never before had I been caught so off guard by a simple request... I agreed to do it.

In that quest I then met Fellania... who showed me that a common woman could indeed be every bit as strong, every bit as powerful if not more so as a man. She broke my preconceptions of what a woman was or needed to be. They were more than just creatures of pleasure and breeding...

Her mountain was harsh, it was a place that tempered all who lived on it with hard stone... and fire. And here I stood in the shrine at the very foot of that mountain, but that mountain had shrunk from the time I’d known it. It’s majesty as a fierce god of the world had waned, and now it was a sacred sleeping god in a world where people didn’t believe in gods anymore. They believed in one god, and from what I’d already discerned, the wars that happened from individuals who said that their belief was more true than another’s belief were superior.

Learning of their world became simple with Pendragon’s instructions in the primary language of English. It was the language the most people in the world spoke... whether native or in addition to their native language. As such, Humanity’s need for classification and clarification led me to the library where I found something called an Encyclopedia. Great Maker I’d never seen so many books in my life than in this place... but this Encyclopedia, made up of more than two dozen volumes of thick books, classified and categorized everything there was to know about this world.

Those books showed me things, but most of all it showed me the radical changes that happened in the world over the past fifty years.

As it appears... my understanding of women before Fellania still remained in the world even unto this day and age. Women were still looked upon as inferior... but laws of equality were making them able to hold the same positions and places as a man... despite that they still had yet to be allowed into some militaries.

But despite all that, the Fellania I'd known, and now the Fellania that was before me now, was a woman of layers. A Spirit Folk herself, born one even, she had the soul of a bear. Shamaness, Druidess, trained by Pendragon and the Monkey King, she had muscles that were greater than any man I'd ever known, the ferocity of a rampaging dragon, but the gentleness of a lamb.

So it was then as I laid back in a chair with sword in hand, looking upon her mountain – her mountain, no one could ever dare call it anything other than her mountain – which had settled and quieted, the last time it'd ever erupted was just over three centuries ago according to various records I'd borne witness to, it was nonetheless whatever people called it now, it was a resting god. Not a sleeping one, just a resting one.

A blanket was brought about my neck and clasped behind me as a young fem with a bosom that was just starting to bud hummed as she set a tray out with various oils and ointments, a bottle of water and then several utensils for cutting and sheering.

Pendragon was here still, but now he was being held by that formidable Lilly Jade woman now, held like a child would hold a stuffed animal. He was remaining by me to alleviate my lack of trust in certain things. I didn't trust people... it was a survival technique. Everyone was out to get you, and no one ever did anything for anyone unless there was something in it for them.

So then there were still nonetheless paradoxes that I'd encountered. The first was the Empress. She'd cared for her people so that she left the safety of her palace with a lone guard – Abraxis I believe his name had been – and journeyed for aide from the various powers across her empire. The second had been Fellania... who rescued me and tended for my wounds and kept me warm when most others would've just looted my body and left me for dead. The third paradox was that of Pendragon's Shrine... even when I knew him hundreds of millennia ago he and his ilk were utter paradoxes to that original thought that I couldn't trust anyone.

He'd given me food and shelter and direction... and asked nothing in for return for it. People didn't do that. No one did that. Or so I thought.

He was one of the three – Him, the Empress Panda... and Fellania – all of whom I found to be different from the world... reason enough for the world to continue. They didn't judge, they didn't exploit... they were exceptions to the world, each of whom I've secretively pledged my sword to. They were people that I trusted. People I loved.

It saddened me that the Empress had died long, long ago, and her remains were nothing more than dust and her very memory remembered perhaps only by myself and Pendragon.

“Do my thoughts betray me?” I asked as this woman lifted a pair of thin sheers toward me. It was everything I could do not to seize her hands and snap her wrists. Shepherds used to sheer the wool of their sheep like this. I always used a knife.

“Anho, delving your thoughts is like a toothless infant trying to gnaw through a block of steel.” Pendragon said bemusingly. “I could penetrate your mind, it would be unpleasant for both of us, and it would be considered an attack lest you let me in.”

“You could've just said no.” I replied.

“But I did earlier... my earlier response apparently wasn’t satisfying enough.” *I smirked and he chuckled.* “But suffice it to say, your mental defenses are quite solid. But why do you ask?”

I swallowed, gathering my thoughts, as the fem began to cut my beard and trim my hair and my hands gripped the chair I was sitting in. I glanced to one of those hands, seeing myself as weaker in this frail human form. My claws were gone in favor of short, stubby fingers and fingernails.

“Who is she to me?” *I asked at last.*

“Keep your head still. Turning your head will cause mistakes, and at the bare minimum your hair will look funny, at worst you could lose an ear. But to answer your question... I can’t give you an exact reply, Anho. She is the direct descendant of Portia, your daughter through Fellania. The Feline portion of her ancestors has long, long ago been bred out of her blood, and through the mixture of so many generations the realization of new traits, the loss of others, of evolution of the species and more, she is one part Fellania through direct relation of mother to daughter, and a bazillion parts that I’ll simply call ‘*other*’. She has a part of that original soul that mated with you in that cave up there on the slope of Mount Fuji to produce that daughter.”

“But only a portion.” *I mentioned, and Pendragon nodded.*

“A copy. Enough of a copy for her to remember you, but not enough of a copy to overwrite who she is and the conditions that made her. A part of her yearns for you, another part wonders why. She looks like her, walks like her, smells and perhaps even acts like her... she has memories that were actually hers, carries her staff... so the answer is... yes... and no.”

I exhaled a long drawn out sigh through my nose as I was prompted back to look at the ceiling, an act that bore my throat to this woman with the sheers. I heard the sound of metal clearing a sheathe and reflex snapped my hand outward to catch the woman’s hand who was tending to me, seeing a straight edged knife in her hand.

“Calm yourself Anho.” *Pen soothed immediately.* “That’s called a Straight Edge Razor. Its purpose is to shave your face. She means you absolutely no harm.”

The woman whimpered, obviously afraid and I let her go. Pen mentioned something to her in a language I didn’t recognize and she swallowed but nodded.

“This next part you will enjoy.” *Pendragon mentioned.* “She is going to place a hot washcloth about your face. It’s steam and moisture will naturally open your pores and allow for a closer shave. I often like hiding underneath a mound of hot linens.”

“So do I! Nee!” *Lilly Jade chimed in.*

“Before she begins though,” *Pen continued.* “Any desire of the sort of facial hair you’d like to keep?”

And I eyed him with a smirk, and gave my order.

Dinner came. I took a nice long cold bath, soaking in waters so frigid that to normal people they might cause hypothermia, feeling the weight of my breasts seemingly impossibly floating in the water as I laid back with my

head resting on a towel while the ice I put in the water melted away about my body. I very nearly slid into a hibernation sleep as I let the heat in my loins slowly drain away.

This was a temporary fix, like putting a band aid on a broken arm, I know... but even temporary was more than enough to bring me solace to control this damned heat! The only fix was to either wait for it to burn itself out... or to actually accept a male's erection inside my loins. I would have only Anhogamon penetrate me, so lest I earned his love, I would rather suffer heat poisoning.

After the bath, I primed and preened, trying to make myself look as lovely and as alluring as possible, brushing my hair and letting White Oak style it up further with hair rods and trailers of vines and leaves and the special fruit that it made along with an elegant array of white cherry-blossom flowers that twisted my hair before wrapped it all into a complex triple braid at the back of my head.

And then amidst my preparations, having rested for the longest time dressed in only a towel around my waist, I rose and hung the towel up but then paused as I looked at myself in the mirror... imagining that this was my wedding day and Anhogamon was in the next room waiting for me – his lovely bride – and it was time to consummate our marriage. As I stood there, hands over thighs and fingers spreading, thumbs and forefingers framing the bulbous, powerful and distended sex, I closed my eyes and breathed a deep exhale as I nearly felt the thickened mass of phallus sliding into me.

My first-mother's thoughts and emotions still remembered the love that bobcat showed her, still remembered the sensations of the moment she became pregnant with my second mother. Inside my bowels I felt the telltale sensations of orgasm coming just by standing there and imagining... my bath almost completely wasted with this act.

My thoughts often times flitted like this as of late... and they always regarded Anhogamon. They were day dreams and remembered wishes from my first mother, thoughts she'd had of herself often... during her wait. But I didn't look like my first mother, not exactly, I was far stronger than she was, for example, though I imagined her stronger of mind than I was. Who else could take a younger Pendragon and the Monkey King?

But as I stood there, I absentmindedly turned to my side and puffed my tummy out, rubbing the hard abs there but nonetheless imagining that I was carrying a cub.

His cub. Portia.

"I'm losing my mind." I sighed and then dressed in the multiple layers of clothing that Pen had been gracious enough to have provided for me. Fine linens and silks patterned in earthen colors that were designed so as to *not* entice me and enhance the naughty bits of this body. Finally was some sprits of perfume to cover the smell of my heat. Pen had provided that too... perhaps having gotten annoyed at all the males in his shrine trying to chase after me and catch me naked.

Striding out of my room and down the hall, heading toward the dining hall, passing a few fairy dragons – the little buggers – that were lacquering the floors, walls and ceiling after having sanded them, I entered the dining hall only to find that it'd been set up for a banquet.

"Uh... did I miss something?" I asked just as a young shrine maiden, a lovely and rather buxom fox that was showing off way too much cleavage, approached and curtsied pleasantly, showing off a heavy tilt and wobble for her ample chest.

“Lady Fellania,” she greeted. “You are to have a place of honor tonight at the head table.” She mentioned and gestured toward the front of the room where the Shrine’s masters usually sat.

“Me?” I blinked. “Why me?”

“Master Pendragon wishes it.” She mentioned and led the way to my seat, which was sat at a low table that one had to sit cross-legged or kneeling behind, whereas the table itself was set with fine china... and by china... I mean Ming Dynasty. A mixture of silver and golden eating utensils were set to each side of each plate – mostly golden, though there were a few sets with silverware. I noticed that I was sat next to Pen’s own seat... to his left.

People continued to be filed in, and it was an immediate surprise to find themselves suddenly in a banquet instead of just regular dinner, with dinner coats being provided for those who were coming in. When Sue and Madoushi entered hand in hand, they too were nonetheless surprised and I waved at them uncertainly, but when they were sat, it was at the head of one of the side tables.

I began to wonder what sort of madness was going on – being around Pen had made me expectant of madness every day – as huge platters of food were brought in and set at the tables, the shrine maidens and a few of the shrine’s monks serving the tables and showing various members to their places, masters at the head, prominent members of the shrine on the side tables, and the initiates around the edge.

We were all sat and the smell of meats and vegetables and fine sake and other wines – even beer – was numbing my head and making my tummy rumble when a gong sounded and Master Pendragon himself entered like Yoda, covered in a white linen robe with a hood that he threw back and walking the staff that was twice his height that had a few broodlings on it, one of them riding the head like it was a bucking bronco like that guy riding the H-bomb from Doctor Strangelove. Pen shook them off briefly before stepping toward the head table, hopping briefly over it, standing his staff up and sitting next to me.

“What’s this all about?” I asked with immediate interest now that he was here.

“To honor my guest of honor. It’s not every day that such a renowned warrior graces my shrine.” He smirked, right as the gong was sounded again and Pen rose.

“Ladies and gentlemen, forgive me for the confusion... but today is an occasion to remember. We are being graced by an honored warrior and samurai from the past. A man that I would liken unto Miyamoto Musashi. His exploits could never be celebrated before, so now I give him the honor he deserves. Please allow me to present the Ronin... Anhogamon.”

The gong was struck again and its sound resonated through the room, and striding in with an equal amount of grace and power, was a man in whom I had to admit made my eyes dilate and my lips purse... right before that heat slammed back into me with a certain degree of passion that I almost swooned from it.

He was a ropy block of precision wrapped in silks that would be reserved only for a Samurai. Though he wore a sort of vest beneath his robes, it showed off the tops of a pair of pectorals that were creased deeply. He had that Reed Richards look of having subtly graying hair over either ear that mixed well into the darker gray of his head hair, which was kept long in the back and bound at the end with a leather chord while his bangs were long before the ears and just long enough to touch his brows in the front. And those eyes... those blue-grey eyes... they penetrated with their own light from under the shadows of his features with the fierce piercing gaze of an animal, while a light grey goatee surrounded his mouth.

His right hand held onto the Katana and Wakizashi that hung over his hip as he was escorted by a shrine maiden to Pen's right, the place of utmost honor in the room, and was sat down there.

Pen was acting as a buffer between us... good thing too, for I quivered for want to throw myself at Anhogamon right then and there.

Pen treated Anho just like the samurai of an emperor instead of just a Ronin, and Anho even smiled a little at the graciousness. From what I knew of him, this was indeed a rather unorthodox thing for him. Regardless... this was a night of celebration and gaiety.

I am Sue.

Oh I had a full tummy. A nice, hot meal from a banquet and my little love resting within my womb... it made me feel lazy and muted as I stood there with the maternal robes Pen had given me. They glorified my femininity, accenting breasts and displaying my belly with my lower body held with short pants and thigh socks. I was in a mild, rather euphoric daze as Fellania floated into my perception just beside me... she was in a daze herself, only a subtly different one.

"So that's where you've been disappearing off to for the past couple weeks." I mentioned with a smirk, rubbing my muscled ten pack in this human form.

"Hm? What?" she asked dreamily.

"Fell... I've known you too long. You've never been really dreamy or absent-minded. At first I thought it was the heat, but seeing you swooning over that Anho guy... you can't fool me... you're in love!"

"What?!" Fell gasped and blushed a deep, deep red. "I was... I was just..." and she took a deep breath and then finally exhaled. "Maybe I am. Probably I am... I don't know, I just... just..." her hands were gripping the window sill and I heard it creek beneath her grip.

I laid a hand on hers and she calmed immediately.

"I'm all right." And she sighed. "It's complicated Sue. It's very, very complicated."

"Love is only complicated if you let it be."

Fell smirked. "So how is the love triangle going then? Lee still hanging around?"

I grimaced. "That love ended, Fell. It's no love triangle any more... Lee is just the unwanted puppy that I'm this close," and I held up thumb and index finger to show a narrow space between them. "From binding up that puppy in a burlap sack and throwing him in the river. I and my child are nothing but a trophy to him. Even if he is the sire, Madoushi will be the father no matter what. Madoushi and I have made a decision, we won't let Lee get in the way of our family... and that family is him, me... and our baby." I rubbed my belly with one hand again. "Lee... is being allowed to hang around out of courtesy to let him know if he is the father or not. If he is then he could socialize with my baby, but he won't be the parent."

"That sounds cruel..." Fell mentioned.

“Cruel? After what he did?”

“You’d punish him forever for something he’d done for so short of a time?”

“He wants to take my baby from me, Fell, but that’s only if it’s a boy. I know it isn’t a boy, but he won’t listen to reason. If it’s a girl... then she’s a burden to him. I would punish him for what he intends to do *if* the child is his and *if* the child is a boy. If it turns out to be not his or a girl... then he’ll want nothing to do with it or me. I find that to be an insult to me and this... precious little one.” *I bit my lower lip and rubbed my belly with both hands now.* “If he knew half of what I knew about her... then he’d leave forever and never return. That’s what I can’t stand Fellania.”

“How do you know that? No father should h-hate their daughter. No man in his right mind should h-hate... his own daughter.”

I stared at her. “Fell... you’re stuttering. Why?”

She took a deep breath, her lower lip trembled and she quickly wiped tears away by making it look like she was just wiping idly at her eyes.

“Nothing...”

“Is it that complicated part?” *I asked.* “Fell... are you... pregnant?”

“No! No not yet.” *She replied quickly.* “I’m still a virgin Sue. But...”

“But...” *I urged and palmed her muscular arm now.*

“Sue... I need to tell you. I need to tell someone, and Pen isn’t the sort of person I feel I can delve my most personal secrets to.”

“Well I’m here with two open ears, Fell.” *I beamed.*

“You know how our first mothers knew each other?” *I nodded.* “Well, at the same time, my first mother knew a guy. They loved, they had a daughter, that daughter became my fore mother, my second mother. Anhogamon is that guy!”

And then she began to tell me of a story awe-inspiring and eye widening lore... a tragic love story that spanned three hundred thousand years and was now culminating with Fell, possessor of her first mother’s dreams, wants and aspirations as well as her memories... and the man her first mother had once, long ago, had a child with.

The complicated part was that distantly – very distantly – This Anhogamon guy and her were related.

“Well Fell, there is one thing I can tell you about all that.”

“What?” *she actually pleaded, her eyes begging.*

“With that many generations between you... I don’t think it really matters do you? Yeah... sure... he’s your ancestor, but how much of him is left in you since then?”

Fell shook her head. "I don't know... but there's more."

"There's more?" I asked, eye brows rising into my hairline.

She nodded. "Sue, I have my first mother in me. How does one love someone they never met before?"

"You just do?" I told her with a smile and a loving touch to my dear soul sister.

I am Remy LeBeau.

There are few things in life for a man to experience better than a woman's body poised above yours, her back arched as taut as a drawn bow with her breasts projecting from off her body while she cooed and oohed and ahed because it was your prick penetrating her loins and making her feel like that. Dad had been a despicable bastard at times, but he had... on one occasion, imparted to me an appreciation for the greatest treasure in his life at least... and that treasure had been my mother.

He loved my mother... really loved her... I mean... how a dick head son of an asshole like him, a bristling sewer rat had ever garnered the affections of my soft, demure and pleasing mother had always been one of those mysteries in life that would probably have made me go insane if I ever learned how it'd ever happened, but nonetheless, it happened, and then I happened... and now this... truly remarkable fem was on my junk and experiencing pleasure from me.

And she just... kept... coming back!

Why?! Why me?! What was I to her? What... what did I have that she wanted to be with me like this? She was placating, she was open, she did things for me that in my experience women just didn't do in these days. She did everything for me first and herself second... why? She didn't act like this with others, I know, I watched... only with me.

It was a question like why did my mom love my dad?

Why did Sen show these affections for me? But unlike the previous question, this question was driving me insane because I didn't know the answer.

Pen said she had a secret that she was holding from me, keeping from me. He said it was for her to reveal it to me. But nonetheless, as we laid there together in goodness knows what place our passions had finally broken down and we'd scattered clothing to be two white bodies making love in virtual darkness. Her body was soft on the surface, hard and chorded underneath as I slid my fingers up her belly and over her many breasts, and as I cupped her face she turned to kiss the palm and hold it to her face... lovingly... affectionately, and the look her longing eyes gave me seemed genuine.

I was convinced that no woman, no matter how grand their acting was... could fake such genuine emotions like that.

Her pussy clenched about my cock in another orgasm, as she cooed again, breathing, moaning, panting... and markedly... this had been the most sexually active period that I'd ever been... and I was often caught in the act when

I was a young male discovering his sexuality and had to be chased off by a boyfriend, a spouse, a mate and so on. But to watch her... genuinely... love me like that.

Love me... I'd only known lust till now. The difference was quite poignant.

I embraced her, rubbing my cheeks against her breasts and then turned her to lie on her back, and immediately her knees came high and them spread wide as I leaned into her, pushed deep inside her, penetrated her over and over as she hugged my head to her bosoms and softly sang her passions to me amidst my kisses upon her breasts and our lovemaking growing sloppy.

And then I rose... I looked at her and felt my ears flatten defensively... I was delving into unfamiliar territory now as I looked down into her eyes, and dipping low; I pressed my lips against hers and kissed her... deeply. When I came up, looking into her eyes, coupled with a woman... I dared to show the most faith I'd ever, ever, ever shown in my entire life.

"I think I love you." I told her, and her face beamed with pure joy...

But then her face turned into one of horror as she shouted: "Remy!"

And I reacted. The slurping sound of my dick sliding from her pussy must've been painful for her, but I snapped nearly fully upright, she pushing me upward to aide the motion and I grappled immediately with a rat in assassin's gear, a silver knife glinting green centimeters from my eye.

Within moments my eyes darted, I saw his clan emblems, saw the etchings on the dagger, and identified him.

He was one of my grandfather's rats; my own cousin even, through my father's younger brother. The silent communication between this rat and me let me know that I was just a target. Only rats knew of me, only rats would want me dead... I was considered a stray now if this rat was here to kill me... a clan deserter. He'd seen Sen... he would report about her if I let him go, report her if he hadn't already done so in observing me in an attempt to kill me. My grandfather would claim her. For her... I found myself doing something rather insane.

The blade was poised to strike, it had to strike or I had to overpower him. So there was no real thing to do... but take it.

So I relaxed in a direction and he took it, and the blade descended and plunged right into my chest on my left side, puncturing the lung. But I then dipped and rose, opening my mouth and closing it about his throat, the sharp incisors puncturing his tracheal arteries in a quick nipping motion. I only needed to break the skin.

"Remy!" Sen screamed for me as I lifted the rat upward in my jaws as he spasmed, and I controlled my body, forced myself to breathe out of only one lung, squeezed one arm to painfully cause my other lung to shut off before I dropped the rat, hearing him convulse and spasm as foam escaped the face mask while the rat quivered.

And there I stood... and man... never before in my life had I ever gotten so limp-dicked.

"Oh great maker... you wait right here... try to stay alive... I-I'll go get..."

"No." I coughed, my voice hoarse as I kept my back to her before wrenching the knife out and tossing it aside.

I'd survived the poisons on it. I had better venom inside me to overpower it. Even my wound started to close immediately despite the silver, pushing out the rat-venom poison... but don't get me wrong... I've never known such pain as green froth spilled around my lips and trickled down my jaws along with the blood. The blood... it tasted... good.

“But... the silver and the poison.”

“I... will be fine.” *I choked again.* “Sen. I want... I want you safe. I will be... back shortly.”

“Remy... I can... I can help you.”

“Yes you can. I have... a mission for you. An all important mission. Tell Master Pendragon... he's at war with my grandfather.”

And I bent, picked up the rat man as his body transformed into a human shape, an automatic thing for Lycans when they died, and hauling him over my shoulder, I walked off with him to place him where my grandfather's people were sure to find him.

In a gutter off the main streets of Tokyo.

Chapter 5: Interim

I am Anhogamon.

The one called Madoushi was a strange, strange being. I've honestly never experienced his kind. He was from what they called the Land Down Under, and being shown a map of the world – who would've thought the world was round and not flat – I understood why, since it was a detached land beneath all others save for the land mass that I was found upon, the landmass known as Antarctica.

Strange... that the land that I was found in had once been merely a mountainous region of ice, and the land I stand upon now was coughed up by the earth from volcanoes like this Mount Fuji that they now called Fellania's Mountain. The world was stranger now than it'd ever been, and that Madoushi was the strangest thing yet... and that was comparing this creature with marvels like skyscrapers and airplanes and helicopters...

A mouth that opened more than twice that of any other species I knew of, small, ropy, thin, but seemingly well-endowed for such a small creature, but he possessed a magic that was entirely new to me. Not Arcane, not Draconic, not Shamanic... this was something entirely new. He was an enigma wrapped up in a riddle tied up with a paradox.

From what I knew... he was also the last of his kind.

He was a guest and yet he was playing the part of the servant, having helped the shrine's maidens and monks in cleaning after the impromptu banquet. I've seen his kind... a servant who'd been a servant for so long it was his habit to serve even after he was given reward enough to be a lord in his own right. He was now returning to his quarters to be with his mate, the fem known as Susan who was friend to the present day Fellania.

The curiosities of this world were plentiful, and curiosity was perhaps my greatest bane. Curiosity of that damn ice cave that got me frozen for nearly three hundred thousand years was a grand example of just that.

But as I observed this strange creature – not a wolf, not a cat, but both and neither, as impossibly as that may sound – strode purposefully toward the rooms he shared with the woman that'd become his future lifemate. I was aware of a complication in their relationship... where the father of her child was in question. As such, even as I remarked upon that from my quiet position where I could observe the goings on of the shrine without being observed suddenly appeared out of his hiding place.

Lee...

I knew of tigers... most of them became warmongering fools. I'd gelded more than my share of tigers who stepped one whit beyond their measure with me. They were all Sharp teeth and claws and more strength than brains, to which this Lee was indeed passionate... but in my opinion he was no warrior, and very foolish.

He was under the foolish assumption that raw strength was greater than skill.

This Lee person slid from where he'd been and barred Madoushi's further precedence. Immediately I saw the rivalry, the eyeing glares, the distancing from Madoushi to reduce conflict, the clenching of fists and tensing of muscles on both parties and the gnashing of teeth. Both of them wanted to lash out at each other uncontrollably.

"I won't let you take her from me." Lee told Madoushi.

“I don’t think that’s either of our choice, Lee.” *Madoushi replied.* “I was under the impression that she told you to go to hell.”

“I love her. I loved her before you arrived.”

“You had a funny way of showing it. Strange that you can tell me these things but you can’t tell her.”

“I *have* told her.”

“What was the statement I heard recently?” Madoushi asked and made a show of rubbing his chin. “Oh yes, I remember... a day late and a dollar short? Isn’t that right Lee?” *Madoushi commented.* “I’m not in the mood to deal with you tonight Lee. You’re in my way and you’re keeping me from the woman I love and who loves me in return.”

“You be quiet! She’s my mate, and she carries my child!”

“She’s my mate, and you don’t know if that’s your child. I always wondered Lee... when you finally accept the fact that the child she carries is really a girl... will you be so interested in caring for her? I mean, a boy... yeah that’s easy for you. I’ve seen the same mentality in my tribe before I fell into Lea Monde – did we tell you about Lea Monde? That’s where I was for her and you weren’t – but anyways, I’ve seen your type. Always excited to accept a son to carry on your lineage, to teach him hunting and fishing and fighting... and yet if it’s a girl...” *Madoushi sneered.* “If it’s a girl then you complete ignore the woman and shove her off, wanting nothing to do with either her or the child. That’s you, Lee, through and through.

“Me... I don’t care one way or the other what the gender of the child is. That’s what separates you and me, and because of that Sue is more accepting of me than she is of you.

“You can take a boy from her mother can’t you... but a girl? Raise a daughter on your own? A boy... you’re perfectly willing to take from her. But a girl? Will you abandon them both, again, when that child exits her and you find out that it’s a girl once and for all?”

“I will raise any child of mine.”

“By taking it from her. Susan doesn’t want you. Even if you are the sire, I am the father. Do you understand that yet? She... doesn’t... want you.”

“Shut up!” *Lee roared and overbore himself before Madoushi, forcing the strange wolf-cat to take a step back.* “My child! My mate!”

“No! My child... *my mate!* And mark my word Lee, I won’t... I won’t let you just take her from me!” *Madoushi, a creature that was only slightly larger than me, actually stood before the towering and muscular Lee, baring teeth and fangs.* “You want to talk about dedication? Fine... let’s talk about what we promise to do. You so much as touch her or my child, and I will break you! Do you understand?! She... Doesn’t... Want... You! Her choice! Her decision... and because of you and your actions, after *you abandoned her*, she has rid herself of you.

“And now after you’ve done some growing up... *now* you want back into her life?! Well I’m in that place that you weren’t man enough to occupy, and she chooses me. I will defend it... I will defend that place as mate, lover, husband and father to the death you despicable kitten.”

“Kitten?!” *Lee roared.*

“Yes! Kitten! Or have you forgotten that I am more than two and a half centuries your elder?”

Two and a half centuries? Curious. That was a story I'd love to hear. True... I was supposedly three hundred thousand years old or so now... but I spent most of that trapped in ice. What then, pray tell, had allowed this curious creature to exist for so long?

“I will not let her go!” *Lee snarled now, baring fangs, jabbing Madoushi in the chest with a finger, and Madoushi winced with each blow.*

“Neither will I!”

“You will back down, mongrel... or I'll...”

“You'll what? Hurt me? Kill me? Oh that'll win her over won't it? She loves me... so how then will that solidify you in her affections if you so much as even look at me wrongly? Now go! Or do you intend to kill me and then try to drag Sue away by the hair to your tent? Oh that'll go over nicely... or haven't you noticed...”

“She's stronger than you.” *Lee was taken aback and Madoushi smirked.* “Oh yes, I'm aware of that. She's well stronger than me... many times even. Does that bother me? Not in the slightest. Now go away before I tell her that you intend to do that. It should be amusing, coward, kitten, I think she'll trounce you... pregnancy and all.”

“Is that a challenge?!” *Lee snarled.*

“What? What was that? A challenge? All that talk I just did sounded like a challenge to you? H-how. How are you so thick to think that?”

Lee wasn't that thick. This was goading, a plan. Master Pendragon wouldn't allow fighting in his home... but... he allowed sparing in a fighter's ring... with supervision. And challenges could be met there.

“Now who's the coward?” *Lee smirked and Madoushi eyed him darkly.*

“You traipse down into Lea Monde, or what's left of it, and be killed over and over every six days for three hundred years and tell me who's the coward Lee.” *Madoushi said and I blinked in surprise... but then so did Lee. Indeed, my curiosity was piqued. How do you die that many times but still be living? I must hear that story.* “But you know what, Lee? Fine... sure... that was a challenge. If I win you will leave... now... go away and never come back.”

“If I win... so do you.” *Lee smirked, and Madoushi raised an eyebrow, obviously gauging his opponent.*

“Deal.” *And the two of them clasped hands tightly, trying to crush each other's hands, and to Madoushi's credit his hand didn't break beneath such strength. In fact, he was smirking at Lee that he couldn't break his hand, and remarkably, both men broke at long last and shook their hands from the tension of squeezing a squeezing thing.*

“Tomorrow then, you cur. And when I show Sue how weak you are as I cast you aside and you leave without a single word... then she'll be mine again.”

“Don't count your chickens before they're hatched... prick.” *And the pair of them stepped around each other, and I pushed my sword back into its scabbard and folded my arms before my chest, watching the pair of them leave.*

It'd been instinct for me to clear the friction of the pommel at the base of the blade from the scabbard when violence approached... one never knew when one might get pulled into a conflict. That... and I felt like I should do something to protect the peace of this shrine. Inasmuch... conflict averted... for now.

I am Madoushi.

Sue found me... I knew she would. When I didn't show up in our rooms like I promised, she'd search for me... though hunt for me was perhaps a better explanation for it. When she did find me, at the end of the hall leading to our rooms – ok, so it wasn't that hard to hunt for me – I felt her press against my back, her incredible breasts flattening between us as her crotch fit into the thick tail hanging from my backside.

"I'm wearing nothing but a sheer robe and a itty-bitty panty." Sue purred, and one hand of hers began to slide down my muscled belly toward my groin to go fishing for my phallus inside my pants. "I was in that room all alone and... and..." she stopped and dragged her hand from my pants when I wasn't getting hard for her. "Something's wrong, isn't it."

"That Lee fellow truly brings out the worst in people sometimes." I told her, and then turning to her, looking up at my love's massive might and beauteous form, I sighed and just told her what'd happened. "Beloved... I'm afraid I've been roped into doing something rather rash."

"Lee! Lee you son of a bitch! Where are you?!" Sue was storming through the shrine, testing the air... hunting, while denizens of the shrine, which included fairy dragons clinging to the walls and ceiling, watched us pass by.

I Pendragon, stood huddled slightly in the center of the hallway as she came down it, hanging on my staff with my robes drawn about me. Something about the spicy food tonight was aggravating the knife wound in my side.

"Pen! Where is Lee?! Where is he, cause I'm going to wring his neck!" Sue snarled while Mad tried to calm her, and when she came near my hand snapped out and I tapped several parts on her leg, and she swooned immediately and sank automatically onto the nearest bench.

Mad looked helplessly between me and her, but finally settled to help her.

"Calm yourself Susan. Think of the baby.." I prompted quietly, ears, horns and antennae folded against the back of my head shamefully. "... I... sadly... know precisely where he is, but I cannot let you do what it is that you intend to do."

"What?" She gasped and came out of the pressure-point induced swoon I'd set her into. "Why not?!"

"My shrine has certain rules to it, rules enough that make it into a living thing that's very much a part of me. For me to deny those rules means to deny myself... it would essentially unmake me." Sue blinked and I sighed. "Lee must've done some snooping. He knows that even I will not, cannot interfere in a challenge, and it is my duty to interfere with anyone attempting to interfere with a challenge. Because the bargain has been struck in my shrine, for the sake of peace, the challenge must be met."

“But... but... Pen!” *Sue gasped.* “Lee’s actions will only cause contention!”

“Lee’s actions weren’t well thought out.” *I commented.* “Mad has to leave forever... and so he must if he loses... but then again, so does Lee if he loses. Mad only has to leave and never come back... it says nothing if you want to follow.” *Sue blinked.* “I want to see you again though Sue. I want to see you too Madoushi, and I’m eager to be rid of Lee.”

“So... if I win,” *Madoushi commented,* “We can be rid of Lee forever, because he thinks that it means I leave Sue. But if I lose... then Sue and I just leave here?”

“Assuredly.” *I nodded.* “You can return to Sue’s home in Saint Paul, it should serve you comfortably enough to support you till the baby is born.”

“Pen...” *Sue growled then.* “How could you put something so stupid in place?”

I smirked and palmed her knee as I looked up at her. “I did it at the behest of your first mother, Susan.” *I smirked and she gave a spasm of shock in surprise.* “It’s served this shrine for three hundred thousand years now... have faith in it. It has always served as the great leveler of conflict in my shrine.”

I am Anhogamon.

The deal struck, the mysticism of this place locking it in place, and so I’d moved myself to the fighting ring early in the morning and paced it’s circumference, and then its diameter, looking about and feeling the Yin and Yang of this sacred fighting ring.

Squatting, picking up some dirt, I let it fall from my fingers as I instinctively did something I’d not done for a long, long time.

I’ve lived war so long I had no other purpose other than for war. But... way back in my own personal histories was a half-remembered grandmother figure that raised me till I was old enough to seek my own way. She’d kept a garden of medicinal herbs, a field too small to be called a farm, too large to be called a garden. She was a healer till the warlords burned her hut to the ground and pillaged her and her home before I slaughtered them all like so much cattle. It marked the first time that I ever felt the berserker rage... but nevertheless, that mature woman, a Spirit Folk like me... or like I was... had conveyed upon me certain skills.

A feel for the soil, a touch of the Earth, a knowledge of what soils were best for planting and pruning what sorts of herbs and plants. A great big apple tree would be perfect right here. The soil was just right for great big fat apples, plucked from their long boughs where they would be nice and green... that perfect mixture of sweet and sour and...

I rose immediately and drew my sword and inch but stopped as I saw Fellania standing there, and I pushed the sword back into place. I was lost to the soil, I’d lowered my guard and someone had gotten within ten paces of me before I heard her. Despite that no one meant me harm here... vigilance was always a necessity.

I pushed the sword back down and rose before her.

“Lady Fellania.” *I said in greeting.*

“Lady?” she smirked, and took to twisting her fingers before palming her belly. “Just Fellania. I am no lady.”

I would be mad not to realize the signs upon her, not to smell her scent that was driving me utterly insane. I fought with every ounce of my being not to show it, not to let my libido take me, but I'd yearned so long for my beloved and my child till I was trapped in that ice block that I'd dreamt of her nightly. Her smell, her movement... the feeling of her sex clapping about mine as we made love. My beloved was dead, long dead... so long ago her remains had turned to dust and returned to the earth, and my child had bred repeatedly with the bears till all that remained of me stood within the form of this... creature that was so Identical to my Fellania.

Master Pendragon told me that she held within her a mote of the soul of my Fellania, and in that mote were memories along with her dreams and her aspirations. This Fellania had told me that she knew me because of those memories.

I clenched my teeth and repressed a swallow as I looked upon this Fellania, and couldn't help but feel my beloved was in her, enough where more than once I thought she was her and had to fight my instincts to go to her, to kiss and embrace her to love her with all my might. I wanted to feel her superb loving form beneath or over me again, to taste her lips and...

“You are a lady to me.” I said and gave a short bow and took a step forward and stopped myself yet again.

I wanted to feel her, touch her, be there against her. All my dreams, my wants for a family, a quiet life, were dashed when I awoke from that ice. But then... dreams and hopes remained in your hand long after they turned to dust, and so here fate was showing me a possible new life, to begin anew. But I had to begin at the beginning... and the relationship with my own very distant progeny had to begin again.

My gaze settled upon all of her, my head tilted so that I looked upon her visage, but I couldn't help but look at other parts of her. She was standing with her robes separated about her bosom, allowing me to see the swells of either, the pert mounds of areola, the erect peaks of her nipples. Despite my control, my want for her was powerful, and I couldn't keep my phallus from distending and fattening at the very least.

“It's nice that you say so.” She told me.

So strong, so tough yet... so demure. Her clothes were tight at the chest and crotch, loose everywhere else. I wanted her... but I was a warrior, and a warrior does not give into temptation. So here we were... making idle small talk... like usual. Damn it! I never felt like such a coward. What I wouldn't give to be wounded again in her cave as she cared for me... then it could just... happen... like it did last time.

“What are you doing here so late, Anhogamon?” she asked me.

“I was investigating the battlefield.” I said simply, looking at the soil here that was cleared for a fighting ring a hundred feet across. I wanted to plant some herbs in it. “Your friend's man has inadvertently been goaded into challenging your friend's former man to a challenge.”

“Mady and Lee?” Fell blinked and I nodded. “H-how... how did that happen?”

“Foolishly. Madoushi need only be patient... defeat his opponent through arbitration... his victory would've been guaranteed, but now it's in question.”

I was turned from her, but nonetheless my ears twitched as she approached, and my bobtail flicked till she was before me, and I smelt the scents off her bosom, of her perfume and her pheromone laced sweat. Suddenly my erection surged and flexed and I closed my eyes. She was afraid to touch me equally. Like I were some feral animal that would bite her, but nonetheless she kept trying. I closed my eyes, tried to block my senses of her, my hearing but nevertheless, with a sigh and a gasp, this great woman slid against me, so tall that she was nearly twice my height in her present form. This fit her swollen bosom just high enough to brush against the crown of my head and ears, while the line of hardened abs was ripe there right before my face.

Finally, at long last, she touched me and pressed her belly against my head before folding her great hands against my head and upper back, and my nostrils flared with the scent of her fur. Her sex was a few scant inches below my face, its swollen bud aroused and wet with moisture... I could smell even that, and remembered the flowery scent of my Fellania's sex when she was incensed. The two of these were identical, and I had a craving the lap the moisture from her womanhood, to taste of the forbidden flower. All I needed to do was tug down a little of her garb and do so.

...

I... feared... she would reject me if I tried that now. I thanked the maker that she couldn't feel my erection against her. Me... afraid of a woman.

"You need to sleep." She told me, her body rumbling as I heard her mighty heart beating through the flesh of her belly.

It was the gentlemanly thing to return the contact, so I chose her hip, the neutral place to return her advance of physical contact... not withstanding that the trousers she wore were split on the side, and in this form they gapped open wide to reveal her widened hip, a bowl of motherly might that would carry sons and daughters for us, make birthing easy and relatively painless for her. It also bore a part of her bottom, and resting my hand upon her hip and the edge of her bottom, I felt all semblance of control I had over my own body waft away as my erection bowed out the front of my trousers with thoughts of her vaginal lips spread against its head, the sensation of penetration as her bulbous clit slid over my greater mass... and we made love like we used to.

"I've slept enough." I replied to her, gripping my swords tightly with the other hand.

I wanted to cup her womanhood, feel its contours and arouse her, love her, lick her, kiss her, suckle from her breasts, and I tensed, smelling her heat effecting me. I was enough of a Spirit Folk for her to effect me. The differences of bear and cat were too great now, or so Pendragon told me, but I was protean, an unfamiliar word to me, but it meant I was original enough to actually impregnate her. Give her my seed. My thumb slid against her hip in the thought of cupping her belly.

Never... never before and not yet since had I felt so comforted than laying beside my beloved with her womb fat and swollen with our daughter inside her. I longed for that feeling again, for the sensation of safety. The old Fellania had given me hope and a semblance of a life away from war... the new one shared that trait with her first mother.

"I can give you a place where you can rest." She told me then, and I stepped back to look up at her.

So strange how alike she and her first mother were... but she was stronger, far stronger, taller, and more durable than her first mother. It was like a slight increase of proportions.

"I've rarely known such places of rest, Lady Fellania." I told her. "Such things are as rare as an oasis in a desert."

“This is a different world, Anhogamon.” *She smiled. It was the same smile, and before I knew it, she was taking my hand and leading me to a shaded area where not even the moon could look upon us.*

There she sat and pulled me to her. I could've resisted... but I didn't. I saw her bared chest and belly, with the cloth of her robes arching in such a way so that her nipples were covered – mostly – and for a moment... for a wild moment I imagined her revealing her womanhood to me, pulling me into her loving embrace. What she did instead was the next best thing, and embraced me, cradled me, kept me safe within her bosom and giving me her chest as pillows.

Despite my earlier convictions of not sleeping... it wasn't long before I was resting soundly against her chest.

I didn't want to let go. I had him... here he was against me. It was a remarkable advance, I couldn't believe I did it, but I did it! Ha-ha-ha-ha! Success! His front to my front, parts of my flesh to his flesh, and cradling him to my thick fur he was actually resting against me. This solid lump of stone and iron had coddled with me and rested with me.

After awhile he did turn, but that was to sit before me and use my tit for a pillow, but remarkably... truly remarkably... sometime right before I nodded off, he began to purr.

I am Lilly Jade.

I was pacing along the halls touching things, mewling as I pawed at this and that, and sliding up to certain people who'd been good to me, I slid my body against theirs and brushed my cheeks and bosom against their faces, wiping my pheromones on them and marking them as my friend. People seemed to like that when I did that, so I continued doing it, and they really liked it when I hugged them and some really liked it when I licked them.

The air rumbled about me as I purred loudly... and I was having a joyous night... till I rounded a corner, and came upon the towering boy-cat called Lee.

He always seemed to be in a foul mood, so I slid up to him with arms behind my back and leaned forward into his face.

“Are you inna bad moody-mood today still? Nya?” *I asked cheerfully, and he turned to me, looking upon me, and suddenly I felt a pang inside my head of something... dangerous, and my ears flattened immediately against the back of my head.*

“You seem to be lonely tonight, Miss Jade. Would you like to accompany me to my room? I would like to make you a woman.”

“But... I already am a woman.” *I blinked, confused.*

“Not what I heard.” *He said sadly. He sounded hurt and alone, and on the one side I wanted to hug and hold and purr for him... but... something... about this man made me feel endangered.* “You have yet to be made into a woman.”

“How do you get made into a woman? I mean... I have boobies... and I don't have a pee-pee, nya, so what else is there?”

He unfolded, and looked over me, his eyes going to places that I felt very vulnerable of him looking upon as his thumbs slid against my arms and biceps, and then touched me on the outsides of my boobies, and I gasped and shrank from him.

“Pen-Pen says that those are my special places. Mew... No one should touch my special places lest I want them to touch my special places.”

“Don't you want me to?” *he asked, and I looked him right in the eye and slowly shook my head no and he released me immediately and I took a step away from him as he did.* “Pah. Another woman who doesn't know what she really wants.” *And he stormed off, and I exhaled a relieved sigh before my usual demeanor came back immediately, the moment forgotten in the face of finding more things fluffy and soft to touch and rub again.*

But that Mister Lee wasn't fluffy or soft. Actually... he felt quite abrasive! So off I went, singing: “La-la-la-le-la-do-mew!”

I am Anhogamon.

I left Fellania sleeping in the small glade as the courtyard began to fill. My instincts would not let me rest while commotion was going on, so I rose and began to pace the perimeter of the goings on as Taoist flags were erected about the fighting ring, and people who were passing by began to ask, and within an hour rumor spread through the denizens of the fight, and the entire shrine, it appeared, was coming down to see.

Lee was the first to arrive, as I expected he might, and he began to pace the battlefield like I'd done the night before. This Lee was dressed as a nomad, chaps, vest and loincloth made only of leathers. An unsophisticated warrior of stone knives and bone clubs. Only his impeccable might would aide him here.

With a profound gathering as this, there was much talk before the second battler, Madoushi and his mate Susan, came down to the fighting ring. After a brief exchange of an embrace and a kiss – I envied their ability to do that – Madoushi entered the ring dressed on pants and a loose shirt. They were the mistakes of a scholar and a wizard to wear clothing like that. They were loose, easily grabable, and such clothes would serve as a bane. Situating myself in a prime position to observe, finally able to get a firsthand look at this Madoushi's power, a gong rang and Master Pendragon approached the ring.

He was covered in his white linen robes that hid his two lower arms, wings and tail. It was because of the ‘Eyes in the sky’ that he did this, hiding from view from eyes I couldn't see. Dragons were subtle in their explanations, but he said this as if it were a literal thing. Others called them ‘satellites’ things that orbited this round – not flat – world of ours.

Since others took it as literal I would too, so I would hide as a human in the open.

Pendragon began with certain degrees of pomp and circumstance, speaking of the two fighters briefly, stating that it was a ring of honor, stating that there was faith in the battle here, but as I stood there under the shade of a tree, one

hand hooked into my trousers and the sash around it, I felt the press of breasts against the back of my head, and the touch of hands upon my shoulders.

I tensed and missed some of the rules, it was a ring of honor, that was all I needed to hear. At the moment I was reveling in the press of Fellania's bosom, the touch of her hands, and smell of her sweat as she perspired in her heat. Her fingers were probing, and they slid tenuously from the point of neutral contact toward affectionate contact, her fingers glancing against my neck and chest, while the index fingers of both hands caressed me. It was a slow arching of her body that pressed her loins and belly against my bottom and back, and I relaxed within her tentative embrace.

A light purr even escaped my throat briefly as she murred, and I trembled lightly as if in a light earthquake before...

"Each participant has made a bargain with each other that will be decided upon the conclusion of this fight. Fight with honor and preserve the peace." Pendragon concluded and walked his staff to a raised chair that had been placed here where as the Shrine Master he would serve as judge.

And I reached up to grab at the tree branch above my head but misjudged the expanse of Fellania's breast, and my fingers slid against the rounded swell of one of them. I couldn't help them from not lingering upon her tit, but I wanted to touch it, feel it... and I did in that single pass before gripping the branch, only to find that the swell of that tit now pressed against forearm, bicep and shoulder. But I didn't move it, and she pressed it more into my arm and murred, and together we watched the fight.

"Ready... FIGHT!" Pendragon stated with a sharp knife hand, and Madoushi and Lee began to pace each other.

My jaw clenched as they began though. This was a cock fight... a meaningless cock fight... and I don't mean male chickens.

'For Sue... I'm doing this for sue' I thought to myself as I stared at Lee, summoning the powers I would need to defeat him. I was going to show this braggart that I was the best man for Sue. That I was the father of our daughter, that I was going to be the man to sate her!

But then Lee roared, and I stepped back in surprise before he skipped forward and ran at me at all fours. I had very little time to react, but react I did. I'd fought Vampires, Wolfmen and Denizens... there were a couple times where I was finished off by Lilith herself, but regardless... I was no damn weakling!

And so as Lee approached while I was gathering my strength, I skipped forward, collapsed into a squat and then surged upward, my massive bite radius clamping down on his jugular as I shook him back and forth, spraying blood down our fronts before I flipped him up over my head and slammed him to the ground before spinning and drop heeling his sternum before rising upward at an impossible angle and skipping back.

Apparently the action impressed others, because there were collective gasps and awws and cheers at that maneuver.

"I learned that maneuver from Master Drake himself, kitten." I growled and swallowed some of Lee's blood. I had his taste, and living with vampires for so long had allowed me to learn a few of their... tricks... about blood. I was no vampire mind you, but vampiric blood magic was unparalleled, and I couldn't help but learn a few of its non-niceties. "I'm stronger than you, maybe not physically, but if you continue this fracas I will break you."

Lee spasmed from his back to his toes and feet and snarled, his pupils wide and his eyes wild with rage.

“Like hell you will little man!” he brayed and then surged for me, swiping with claws that were like hooking daggers, and I skipped and dodged and weaved out of him, sliding into a dance of sorts as I kicked and slapped his hands just enough out of the way so that they couldn’t hurt me.

His jaws snapped, his feet swept... but he wasn’t as feral as Wolfmen, or as insane as Denizens, or as skilled as an immortal vampire. I fought vampire dukes and lords, their princes and princesses, sparred with Master Drake himself even, and this sloppy, half hearted maneuverings of this tiger-man were not worth my match.

His claws slashed through my shirt... a gift from Pendragon himself, and after he tried to grip that shirt and pull me in, I showed him the err of his ways as I slipped from it and quickly wrapped and tied it about his fists before swinging over his fists with both feet, striking him in the face and knocking him sideways onto the ground before I slid and twisted to my feet with my long, thick and striped tail trailing behind me.

Standing there above him, I paced into a position of superiority, breathing deeply now as he used his strength to break the shirt and throw its shredded remains away.

“We don’t need to do this. Just give up... go away... you are no match for me kitten.”

“Grah! Stop calling me that!” he shrieked and twisted, bundled himself up and leapt impossibly at me like only tiger could.

I merely lifted a hand and caught him, but his weight was more than I thought it was and I had to add my other hand to hold him in place.

“All too easy.” I told him and with a sound rupturing sound, a spasm occurred in the air and the air solidified into a fist that gripped Lee and carried him away before palming him face-first into the dirt right to the edge of the ring, scattering dirt and rocks in every direction. “Give up damn you!” I shouted after him as he got up, panting, breathing, growling and snarling, showing his fangs. “I won’t let you take her from me!”

“You don’t understand, little man... if I can’t have her... then neither can you.”

And he started forward.

I am Anhogamon.

Lee’s movements betrayed him... I saw the strike coming but Madoushi didn’t see it. I merely shook my head as that mountainous fist struck the strange wolf-cat along the side of the head. But then again he was a magician... but honestly... a battle mage would’ve at least seen such a blow coming. Or did he and just take it?

“Get up!” Lee snarled, definitely in a battle stance now. Lee was sloppy... disorganized... unruly. Obviously self-taught. There was no mastery behind him. “Get up you little cur, you mongrel... I’m going to break you.”

Madoushi clenched teeth and jaw briefly before flexing that weird jaw of his, the thing opening to that impossibly wide distance before he clenched his teeth again and his jaw popped back into place.

“That... does it.” Madoushi said and turned, and again I found myself surprised.

Again, like the first time I saw him use his magic, there was no chant, there was no spell formula, there were no gestures nor was there the click of the arcane in the air that rose my hackles on end whenever it happened, it was as if the world decided to work to his will regardless of whatever laws or rules the world ran by. What happened was obviously against every natural law, but it fit in with the natural world so as to not offset anything in it. This magic felt like it belonged. It was peaceful even. But the effect that erupted swirled the air, made it coil in on itself and strike Lee with concussive force, picking the tiger up in another nearly invisible hand and slamming him against the ground again like a god's hand, continuing to pressure him against the ground to deepen the impact crater about Lee's body.

Madoushi lightly rose upward into the air, hovering before the crowd a mere hand-span above the ground as Lee slowly got to his feet, stones from the ground falling off him before he tensed and roared.

“Shut... up.” Madoushi growled and lifting a hand he gestured toward Lee and he flicked marble chunks at Lee, the first lodging itself into Lee's mouth before Lee crushed it in his jaw, right before more stones crashed against Lee's body from Madoushi throwing them at him with incredible precision that burst against Lee's head and body as Lee lashed to destroy the pieces.

Then turning on his heel Lee leapt forward onto all fours and ran at Madoushi, but Madoushi made a flicking motion and a solid explosion of sound knocked Lee upward off the ground before Madoushi caught Lee in another hand of force. There was effort in Madoushi's eyes, but nonetheless to be able to pick up a creature of Lee's size and strength wasn't easy for most mages that I knew of, and such control! Madoushi then began slapping Lee repeatedly against the ground, dragging him about and giving him road rash, turning him slapping him against the surface of the ground over and over again, and then holding him, used both hands in a crushing motion and Lee gasped as I heard ribs creak and groan.

Madoushi shook him like a rag doll, and then expelled him forward with an explosion of force that slapped him against a boulder jutting out of the ring with enough force to cause the thing to crack and splinter from the blow before he let Lee fall to the floor while Madoushi panted with the exertion.

“You... will not have her... so long as I draw breath... monster.” Madoushi spoke directly as Lee rolled onto his back, panting.

There were tears in Lee's eyes. Not physical pain ones... but tears brought instead by emotional pain.

“And who are you to deem that? She was my love, my mate. I loved her!” he bellowed out. “She's my family, she bares my child!” and Lee began to rise to hands and knees. “And then you came along and took her from me. She chose me first!”

“You abandoned her.” Madoushi said directly to him and the crowd was now quiet as they watched this exchange. “For a man who loves her, you sure do have a difficult time in saying it.”

“I tried to!” he bellowed and lurched to his feet. That was a mistake in you Madoushi. Never let an enemy get back to his feet once you've felled him. “I... tried to! Do you have any idea how often my heart has been broken you wretch?! Do you know how many females have broken my heart?!” Lee struck the stone he'd just been slammed against with his hammer fist blow and it shattered beneath his hand. “I find a new female, stronger than any other female ever! Stronger than me perhaps! She was in heat when I fucked her... fucked her before you! That's my child growing inside her! How dare you take from me what's mine!”

“Do you have any idea what we went through? Do you have any idea what the child is, how Susan came about actually getting her into her womb? Have you even asked her, her side of the story?!” *Madoushi shouted back.* “She carries the spirit of a splintered girl... now made one after centuries, millennia even! She bares a daughter from a world that held me for centuries... it was our union that made that child! I watched a primordial entity save that child, place it in her womb. I was there when you abandoned her, I was there to comfort and fill the void *you created!*”

“Shut up!” *Lee shouted and stooped, grabbed a chunk of stone and lobbed it at Madoushi with incredible force, and out of desperation Madoushi flung both arms upward to catch the stone with his power as it came sailing for him. But Lee rushed across the hall in two leaping bounds, punched from behind the rock to obscure the blow from coming and drove the breaking stone shattering from his fist squaring into Madoushi’s midsection.*

Such a blow should’ve killed him, but it didn’t, and as Madoushi recovered, arching with a spin back up into the air, the solidified air suddenly exploded outward from him and cut Lee along many horizons, cutting dozens of long gashes out of his face and body and pummeling him with concussive blows as if Lee was in the middle of a brawl of enemies armed with gauntlets and knives. But Lee roared and surged forward. He took incredible seething damage rushing through the splaying magic till he raised a fist and struck Madoushi on the head, disrupting his concentration.

Good... Madoushi’s magic required concentration... just like any other form of magic. I was beginning to think that it had no restrictions, but just like any other magician, you break the concentration, you break the magic.

But Madoushi fell from the blow, only to be caught by Lee as he dragged Madoushi upward to slam him against his knee, bending him painfully, a motion that should’ve broken Madoushi in two, but it didn’t. This ‘demon-sorcerer’ had his surprises yet.

Lee then spiked Madoushi against the ground and gave his side a vengeful kick, sending Madoushi rolling against the ground before the sorcerer rolled to his feet and twisted up into the air again for greater mobility.

“You... cannot... have... her...” *Madoushi choked as Lee approached before an explosion of force erupted from the strange wolf-cat creature, radiating from him in every direction to shatter stones and skip rocks and sands away, and the crowd had to shield themselves from such power as Lee was peppered with rocks and stung with sand before being flipped backward by several feet.*

... but that was a desperation move. And it didn’t work.

Lee’s eyes were maddened now. He was dangerous, and as Madoushi lifted rocks with his strange magic, hurling them at Lee, he merely took the blow. He took it and just let it break against him or roll off him. I’d seen this look, I’d fought against people who had this look... I had this look myself, it was the look that meant ‘I am going to kill you no matter what,’ look.

Nothing was more dangerous than an opponent who had nothing left to lose.

Instinctively I shifted my swords and cleared the pommel from the scabbard.

“Anho?” *Fellania said above me.* “Anho... what’s wrong?”

“That Lee is mad.” I said right as another rock struck him right before the eyes and he stopped, stepped back to retain his balance, shook his head and then continued forward, his teeth broadening into a feral, mad grin. “He’s not in the right state for an honor match.”

Fellania looked and saw it too, and I felt her fear.

“S-somebody stop the fight.” She said immediately. “Stop the fight!” she shouted but Pendragon himself was already rising.

“Lee!” he shouted, but Lee roared as he skipped forward, and Madoushi lifted his hands and dust and rocks and even solidified air exploded against Lee’s body, stripping his fur and flesh open, but before anyone could stop it, the inevitable blow nevertheless came.

Lee’s hands clamped about Madoushi’s throat, and the sheer might of that tiger clenched tightly about Madoushi’s neck and began squeezing.

“The last thing you shall ever hear you cur... is your vertebrae cracking one... by... one!” Lee scream-roared at Madoushi, and Madoushi’s hands lifted and blasts of power erupted from him, Lee’s fur and flesh growing flayed alive, Lee’s arms dislocating and bones breaking, but those fingers still clenched, choking the life out of Madoushi.

“Lee!” Pendragon shouted, and with the flick of a hand a crushing blow struck the tiger broadsides, dazing the tiger only briefly before he reenacted his strangle hold. The second blow from the dragon cracked and broke the ribs along one side of the tiger’s body before I heard the scream from Susan.

“Lee! You fucking bastard!!” Susan screamed and transformed in the middle of everyone, her clothes shredding about her hyper-sexual and utterly mighty body, the change knocking monks and shrine maidens aside before she leapt into the fray and sank her teeth and claws into Lee’s body at his neck and arms, her claws shredding at his muscles, etching grooves into his bones as she screamed and lifted both tiger and wolf-tiger up off the ground with her sheer muscular power.

There would be death here... the peace would be destroyed, the land tainted, and having found one oasis in the desert of this damnable world, I would not see it broken.

Something happened in me, something I hadn’t intended to do. It burst from me with such passion as I felt the world slow down and my body speed up, and one instant I was beside Fell as she was moving to help her friend, and in the next I’d covered hundreds of feet and was now before the collection of brawlers as monks with man-catchers – weapons with spikes and hooks set in rings meant to take hold of necks and limbs and rend them, meant to damage Lee enough in letting go of Madoushi.

As I arrived he was slow-motioning in throttling Madoushi’s head against the ground repeatedly right as another blow from Pendragon struck him in the head, and in a single swooping flash, my sword left from its scabbard, leapt into the fray. The pommel struck Susan in the temple, retreated, struck Lee in the temple as well before the blade twisted almost of its own accord, dancing to my intentions if not my will, dipped between Lee’s arms and sliced open first one wrist to sever the tendons and then twisted and plunged do sever the other side. I twisted, squatted, gripped Madoushi and pulled as time and my speed seemed to reorder and align themselves and the world crashed into motion again. Sue was sent sideways, Lee crumpled downward, his hands opening as their grip were forcibly broken, and Madoushi was pulled to safety by the scruff of his neck.

Angry cries from monks and shrine maidens at the abdominal act that had happened in a ring of honor were silenced as the ground trembled noisily beneath our feet, and trees shook and bells rung and chimes danced as Pendragon, trembled in rage.

I turned and looked to the mountain, and saw smoke briefly release from its peak as the whole of it swelled subtly and then retracted in Pendragon's rage.

"LEE!!" Pendragon's voice was absolute in that moment, it silenced everything else as the weretiger rose groggily to his feet, arms useless at the moment as they slowly healed, right before Pen threw his robes open, slapped his tail against the ground, and lifting all four arms, Lee was lifted upward spread eagle.

Pendragon's lower jaw split apart, revealing a series of four mandibles to either side of his narrower lower jaw that usually didn't open... as a matter of fact, till now, I never knew his jaw could do that. But the little dragon's arms and hands were pulling and twisting Lee's body as I heard bones crunch and tendons grind and all four of Lee's limbs were dislocated. I merely watched. For defying a field of honor... Lee deserved this in my mind.

His body was twisted impossibly, and the tiger roared out in pain before the impossible happened...

"Nee!!!" a Vivacious fem churled as Pen was snatched up and embraced tightly with a pair of utterly large breasts pressing over his head, and ever so slowly his mandibles closed, and his expression softened within the light brown fur of that overly gigantic kitten, Lilly Jade.

And Pen lowered first one pair and then the other pair of arms and Lee collapsed to the ground, and laid there while his body repaired itself, and he received the agony as his muscles pulled ball joints of bones back into their sockets.

Incredible.

"Put him in detention." Pen said at last, his wide eyes narrowing as the rumbling of the world stopped and Lilly began to groom his little mane of hair with her tongue comb, squeezing him to her breasts as Fellania came to my side and held onto my arm.

The monks with the man-catchers nodded and stabbed their weapons around Lee's throat, I noticed the silver spikes on the insides of the curving things and they forced him to his feet once his legs were healed enough to walk.

But once he was on his feet...

"No! Murderer!" Susan screamed and in one expertly fluid motion, slapped Lee in the face with her claws out, scraping deep gouges against his face, kneed him in the nuts and then began to strangle him despite the man-catchers.

My brows went right up into my hairline before my Fellania... my Fellania... transformed quickly and pulled Susan away in a bear hug and held her into a sleeper hold till she started to relax.

With a swipe of my sword, all the blood on it slid off and splattered the ground, leaving it impossibly clean now... I didn't even have to wipe it off. I inspected my old friend, twisting it from side to side, feeling added power in the old blade tempered in fire and now in ice before I sheathed the blade and began to follow the monks as they hauled Lee away... two more monks putting man-catchers around Lee's thick wrists and bending them behind his back.

“Anho... where are you going?” Fell asked as I turned to follow the monks and Lee while she cradled her friends drooping form in her arms, and I turned partly to regard her.

“To do as Master Pendragon commanded.” I replied simply. “Your friend’s man is in poor health, be... Fellania.” I almost said beloved, and her expression was hopeful as she looked at me. Why couldn’t I say it? “He needs tending to.” And I followed the shrine’s monks as they hauled the betrayer down into the bowels of the shrine to be locked up like the dishonorable animal that he was.

On my way down, I gripped a blade of Bamboo grass and tugged it off the main plant.

Lee whipped to face me now that I was alone with him, his eyes dark and feral, teeth clenching, seeing me as I stood there on my two feet as tall as he was on his knees.

“You dare...” the tiger man brayed after I’d swatted him promptly with the bamboo grass across the face.

“I dare.” I told him, and I expended my inner power as a Physical Adept and drove that power into the kick that slammed my small toes into Lee’s broken ribs, and the power exerted blasted him from me, slapped him against a wall in the large cell only to send him bouncing off it and into a series of silver bars. He screamed as the silver burned him like heated lead, and he pulled himself off the bars and inspected the damage.

“Ah-ha... damn you!” he roared. “You’d attack the unarmed and injured.”

“Oh honor now is it?” I asked with a raised eyebrow. “Funny how honor works when it suits you.”

Through my life, I’d picked up whatever I fancied and whatever a person was willing to teach me, so stepping forward I skipped through space, a technique that was close to a teleport, but was a flicker of pseudomotion to brought me from one point and ended me at another, transporting me from outside his cell to directly before him.

As I mentioned... it was foolish to allow an enemy to get to his feet, so with two cracks of motion that happened in the blink of an eye, I stomped on his foot to collapse the digitigrade heel to the ground before striking the back of his knee in a double motion kick that drove the tiger to his knees.

“Dishonorable, disgraceful, savage... everything I’ve come to expect of tigers.” I mentioned as I walked about him, swiping the switch of bamboo grass before me before I gripped his mane and yanked it back so that he could look at me.

“You... whoever you are... stay out of this.” Lee managed and began to rise, but I snapped the bamboo switch against his face and the lashing split his flesh open from the blow and the pain drove him to the ground again.

“Silence boy. You were about to kill that other boy in cold blood. There was nothing honorable about it... you cared only that he was in the way. I came to stop you. You’ve driven a point that he will not take... so now that brings us to you and me.”

“Piss off.”

“Poor choice of words.” I said, and with a swordsman’s embellishment, the bamboo branch was twisted and swiveled before I brought it upward between his legs to crack its nigh-unyielding strength against his groin.

I had a master that had taught me with nothing but a blade of bamboo grass in his hand, and tapping me in the most sensitive of spots got me to learn to guard them... but regardless... What a lovely high-pitched voice this Lee had, but it soon dropped octaves into a roar as he surged with a sweeping brush with his claws as I merely hopped up and balanced on his arm briefly to strike him about the head and face with the switch, the last blow catching him in the ear and knocking him explosively to one side against another wall of silver bars that he screamed and pulled himself off of.

“Still awake? Good. You’re as strong as you look.” *I commented as I walked up his arm and onto his back. “Let’s see if this strikes you well enough, you honorless coward... you are being defeated by a man half your size, who is beating you with a piece of grass.”*

Lee roared again – that’s right, let them hear your arrogance... roar! Roar loudly – and I hopped over the swinging arm that telegraphed itself via smoke signals that it was so obvious to me, and when I came back down I jabbed the tip of my switch into Lee’s nerve bundle at the crook of pectoral and shoulder, paralyzing his whole arm briefly before I bent down and faced him.

“In short order, Lee of the Tigers... I’m going to show you that the thing that hurts more than your body... is your broken pride.”

And hopping off him, I reached down and gripped a scruff of his flesh and fur in my claws and flipped him with strength that never has any of my previous opponents thought I was capable of, striking his back with the bamboo staff, before gripping an ankle and flipping him over my head and onto the ground, snapping the switch against points of his body.

Oh he fought... he tried to at least... but my point was to delay this beast while I had faith that the noise would ultimately bring the master of the shrine here. Perhaps then... Lee could face the Master Pendragon with a little honor and humility.

I am Madoushi, the ‘Demon Sorcerer’ as I was called by the Chinamen in Deadwood.

I’d never known such peace... the ground faded from beneath me and I floated in darkness, floating there for a short while, seeming to rise before I felt a hand on my chest, and opening one eye as much as I could, I spied a shade there who was keeping me from rising any further.

“Too early, Madoushi.” *A very familiar voice said, one that I’d hoped I’d never hear from again, and I saw the black shade of Death above me.*

“Oh Great Maker... what have I done to continue seeing you after leaving that purgatory?”

“What has been seen cannot be unseen, Madoushi. You will always be able to see me,” *Death mentioned in a rather final way.*

“Am I... dead?” *I asked somehow without breathing or even speaking. Death replied by showing me a watch on a golden chain, which he immediately began to wind.*

“Close... but not yet.” *Death responded. “You’re caught between moments of tick and tock...”*

“Like... when you saved us from Deadwood.” *I mentioned, again without speaking or breathing.*

“Not exactly.” *Death responded and pushed me back down again as I kept floating upward.* “Your watch stopped, this is the moment of death, but it’s not time for you to pass on yet, Madoushi. Fate and Destiny it seems has something specifically planned for you.” *He held up a little notebook.* “You’re not on the schedule for me to take you yet... so... your watch gets rewound. This next part... isn’t going to be pleasant.”

“Why?” *I asked.*

Death looked downward and tilted his head as the ever-present cigar in his mouth glowed brightly as he inhaled from it. “Well... your body is a mess. But... we have to put you back in it.” *And lifting his scythe, Death planted it on my stomach and shoved me back downward with a mighty blow, and I slammed into a body that was still hurting from a popped lung and broken bones. It was like falling from a high precipice and impacting against the ground only to wake up and feel what happened to you from the fall.*

The pain made me pass out.

I am Pendragon.

I squatted on a table, balancing my staff against my shoulder while Susan knelt before Madoushi’s bed.

“I’m... so sorry Susan.” *I told her.* “I... get so used to expecting the futures that I see that I don’t expect what’s happening right before my eyes. I saw the tension between Madoushi and Lee, but I ignored it because I didn’t see this fight happening.”

Susan was quiet... deathly still, her fingers clenching on the edges of her newly donned dressing robe before she finally whimpered out a “Why?”

“Do you want the truth?” *I asked her quietly and she nodded vigorously almost immediately.*

“They were fighting over you.” *I told her and I heard a gasping sob escape her as she bent over herself a little. The glistening of tears fell from her eyes.* “Lee... was enraged that he lost you. In his grief he sought to eliminate Madoushi from the equation.”

“His grief?!” *she shrieked and turned to me as she bounded to her feet, her fury over the matter made her transform slightly, and suddenly her dressing gown was stressed to its maximums around a body that had suddenly gained more than a hundred pounds in bone, muscle, sinew and breast and milk weight.* “What does he have to grieve for?!”

I thought about holding my tongue... but she did ask for the truth. “What do you want to do to Lee right now?”

“I want to beat him within an inch of his damned life! Look at Madoushi! He nearly took Mady away from me!”

“Very nearly... yes. But then Susan... Madoushi is taking you from Lee.” *I said and her eyes widened and jaw dropped before she turned away from me.* “He realized much too late what was important to him, Susan. A wife... a

child... and when he realized what was important and realized that he didn't fight enough for you, so he fought ferociously for you now. Luckily... however... Anhogamon was there to interfere on Madoushi's behalf.

"I was not quick enough... if not for him, Madoushi would be dead now."

"Anhogamon?" *she repeated in tears.*

"My guest of honor at the banquet." *I replied.* "He saved Madoushi's life... more or less." *And I looked to Mad as he laid there... bandaged and his wounds sealed, and though he wasn't dead, his spiritual connectivity to his body was barely there. He was only technically alive.*

Everything was spiraling out of control. I wasn't foreseeing any of this. Anhogamon's early release from his prison of ice, the rats coming in their attempts to murder Remy, and now this fight... I'd seen none of it, not a single element of it. Something was definitely wrong. I had to change my thinking.

"Lee is... imprisoned." *I told her.* "He was sobbing when Anhogamon was done with him, kept crying for you. He wants to see you."

"I don't want to see him." *She said between tears and ferocious anger.* "W-why... why can't you just send him away? Why can't you just boot him out of the shrine and send him home to his tribe?!"

"That'd make an enemy of him, Susan. But I will do what you request... provided you do something else first."

"I'll do it." *She said immediately and I sighed. She was so impatient to be rid of him that she'd agree to anything before hearing it.*

"Talk... to him." *I mentioned.*

"Talk to him? Pen... how could you ask such a thing?" *she sounded scandalized, betrayed...*

Getting up, I stepped off the table and walked behind her, rubbing her incredibly powerful back as she sat down in stunned awe that I'd suggest such a thing. "For your sake... and his. You're a woman underneath all that might and power, and you're soon to be a mother. Your instincts are to protect your child at all costs. You think to provide her with the best father, the best living conditions, nurture the child.

"His instincts are to protect what may be his child. He needs to know if you love him anymore or not, he needs to know that you've chosen another. But ultimately... the only thing that will keep him from your life forever... is that he needs to know that the child you carry... isn't his."

"But it isn't his! I know she isn't!"

"I wish I could support that thought, Susan... but I just don't know for sure. None of us will know for certain till after the baby is born. The only way for certain is for us to do a genetic smear of the child in comparison to the two potential father's DNA, but that cannot be done for months yet... the fetus must be mature before blood or even amniotic fluid extraction can be attempted. Even then... the process is dangerous for both you and the child."

Sue slid her hands and cradled her superbly muscular belly and whimpered. Her motherly instincts over her unborn child were going into overdrive at the moment.

"I didn't think that this matter was important enough to risk yours and the baby's life, Susan." *I told her and she bit her lower lip and shook her head that she didn't think it was either. To her... nothing was more important than that unborn babe in her womb.*

"N-no. No. No pins, no needles... not in her." *She said and I nodded and rubbed her broad back again.*

"We've done all that we can for Madoushi, Susan. We just... have to wait for him to come back." *I fell quiet for a moment. "Do you want to... no... you probably just want to wait here for Mad to come back." And I turned to leave her to her vigil.*

I was at the door when Sue spoke up. "Do I want to do what?"

"Speak with Lee now... or later?" *I asked, and she fell silent again.*

"Now. And quickly." *She said and got immediately up to her feet to follow me. "I want this out of the way now!"*

I am Madoushi, Demon-Sorcerer, vagabond, lost one... last of my kind.

I was in the Dreamtime, or at least I awoke to it. The Dreamtime was what was real, everything else was fake... a shell around the Dreamtime. Regardless as to whatever this realm was, there was one fundamental truth about it that sat rather poignantly in my mind.

Never... in over three hundred years, had I ever woken up in it.

Dreamers at night will skirt its edges, having dreams of flying and so on, but they never fully enter it, or at least I never did. There were rumors when I was younger that the shamans could wake up in the Dreamtime, so even while their body, their shell slept, their minds still walked the land and tended to the earth and to the spirits that abounded everywhere here.

I didn't do this on purpose... so I was sure that it was an accident. Or was it on instinct?

Rising, looking about me, I found myself resting underneath silken sheets in a grand poufy bed the size of a grand banquet table inside an ostentatiously constructed chamber that spanned for hundreds of yards in every direction.

I was naked, but healed, only here in the Dreamtime I was humongous, enormous, powerful... my usually ropy body now supremely muscular and heaving. The real body was a reflection of one's knowledge and wisdom coupled with their hidden strengths and powers. In this world... I was as physically imposing as Sue or Fell was in the 'real' world.

Getting up, throwing the sheets aside and looking about – taking a moment to stuff my rather large phallus into its belly pocket – I was startled to hear a sound that I'd not heard in centuries: The sound of a didgeridoo.

My curiosity piqued, I took to following it through the room of towering and broad pillars holding up a roof ten stories tall, glancing at my prowess in a reflection in a highly-polished floor, I followed the sound to a massive set of doors that went from ceiling to floor and were large enough to let an army through it. My might in this world was so incredible I could open the door with one hand, pulling open one side before I stepped out into a grand hallway of flowing silks and glossy woods with gigantic marble columns supporting a vaulted ceiling. The hall was so long

that it felt like I'd traversed it for miles or more before coming to a stairway that just like the door to the chambers that I woke within, was wide enough for an army to walk up and down it.

Down those stairs I went, the sound of the didgeridoo growing louder as I walked along more halls and chambers before coming out above a picturesque meadow that dipped and rolled as far as the eye could see, and out in the distance was the grand mountain of Mount Fuji, but here it smoked with white billowing smoke giving way to the clouds and the crystalline blue sky lit by a bright sun.

This was the reality of Pendragon's shrine, with towering bamboo forests, his quoi ponds instead grand lakes with arching walk ways spanning the entire lakes, and some of the quoi were great and massive creatures that stirred along the surface of the water with their long whiskers with their sizes greater than some whales.

The sound of the didgeridoo was louder now, and cupping a hand to shield my eyes from the brilliant sun as I looked about, I saw in the distance a figure atop a grand boulder in the distance, and I walked to him.

The distance was miles long, but with the air so pure and crisp and the slope of the land so subtle, one could see for great distances here, so it took some time for me to traverse the distance, all while long green grasses and frilly flowers brushed against my bare muscular legs and bulging penile pouch. But as I neared the figure, I found myself pausing at first, and then in my excitement I hurried, and then ran into a sprint in my excitement, and yes indeed when I finally stopped directly before this being, I found myself before... one of my own kind!

"What is this? This is the truth, but what am I seeing?" I asked the didgeridoo player. "I thought... I was all alone."

The didgeridoo player stopped playing and directed his attention toward me. Other than a shamanic bag, he was completely naked as I was, hulking in his muscular mass, a perfect masculine body of hardened bone and muscle. He had the great mane and beard of a shaman, kept back with a headband, and he was so muscular even Susan and Fellania couldn't compare.

"Who told you that? Certainly not me." He set the instrument aside.

"Then if you exist... that means I'm... not alone." I blinked and panted with excitement. "I'm not alone!" and I threw my hands up into the air but stopped in my cheering a moment later. "Wait... If I'm not alone... then where are all of you?"

"Ah... but 'All' implies many, Madoushi." The stranger said to me, the body paint on his form glowing in shining blues and blacks along with the ritualistic scaring he bore as well to make his entire form a conduit for the Dreamtime. "We are anything but... 'many.'"

"Few?" I ventured and he shook his head.

"Few is still too strong of a word, Madoushi. A couple... as in a couple of families... we are all that keeps our species from nonexistence."

"Where are you?! Can I meet them? May I see them? Where is the rest of our kind?"

"Patience... patience." He held up a hand. "You don't have the skill to travel there yet." I deflated in disappointment. "We've suffered great losses, Madoushi... our good deeds were met with betrayal, and with so few of us left, we suffered more losses getting those remaining members to safety. Then, when we were betrayed, our numbers were no greater than five. But now, through the good grace of the Merciful Maker," he looked up and

cupped his hands about his face and looked to the sun, “We are now twelve. The Thylacine is all but extinct; we’d all but given up on the waking plane. A century or two later we might return, but for now, finding one of our own still on Earth Realm... it is a heartening thing, Madoushi.”

“How do you know me?”

“If you really understood the Dreamtime, Madoushi, you’d understand that question. All is borne clear in this world... and your name is up for grabs for all those who have mind enough to sense it.” *He leaned forward.* “Which brings us to you. You can help us Madoushi. You can speed up the clock; you can bring us home sooner.”

“How?” *I was eager to help... eager to prove that I wasn’t the last.*

“A beacon is a powerful guide, Madoushi. I can teach you much about the Dreamtime, make you a beacon for us to follow back to Earth Realm, but you need to know more about how to interact with the Dreamtime to be that guide for us.”

“Ok. So you’ll teach me?” *he nodded.* “Do I at least get to know your name?”

He smiled. “Not... till you learn it for yourself.” *I blinked and he leaned forward further.* “But to show you that my cause is genuine, I’m here to give you your first lesson.”

“Lesson?”

He nodded. “You are separated from your body. I assume your knowledge of healing is limited or else you’d’ve already returned to your body when that Wyrn called your soul back.”

“Wyrn? What Wyrn?”

The shaman looked with a jerk of his head and sat back with a smile, and when I turned around to see what he’d indicated I just... stared.

There was a... a Dragon! Only it was a massively massive huge dragon, coiled sleeping around the house that I’d come from, which in the Dreamtime was a palace! A castle of immense magnitude made of gold and jade and fine woods painted red. The dragon was serpentine, with beautiful, colorful wings at its back that were long slats like an insects, great horns and two long antennae flaring backward coiled almost as long as the creature’s body was. Pink mist wafted from his nostrils while the splayed fringe at the tip of his tail wagged lazily.

A body was made larger in the Dreamtime based upon their inner self. The magnitude of their knowledge and wisdom and intelligence coupled with their inner might and power translated into reality in this world... but to be an insect against such a creature... there was only one dragon I knew of who could be like that.

“P-Pendragon! But he’s the size of... of a mountain!” *and I thought... Great Maker... what a creature!*

“And the gentlest giant I ever did see. See how he coils about his house? He protects it with himself. Understand the symbology?” *I nodded.* “Good... lesson learned. Now... let us begin with self-healing. We need to return you to that fine feline of yours as soon as possible.”

I am Sue.

Pen was just... I had to give him that that. Justice no matter the cost.

Lee was inside a cell of hard wrought bars made of silver, forced into his human form by a collar around his neck. The collar locked him as a human and made his self-healing slow and arduous, and just to touch those bars would've been painful indeed for a Lycan. Looking upon Lee, I found that he had several burn marks on him as if he'd thrown himself or been thrown already against those bars, and bore a multitude of cuts and bruises not caused by his fight with Mady. He'd been punished severely by someone, and seeing Anhogamon sitting on the ground and sharpening a bamboo rod into a flute, I could only assume that he'd been the one that did the job.

Now Lee was laying face-first in the bed, staring at the floor when Pen and I arrived, and after speaking with Anho a moment, the diminutive warrior nodded and left the chamber before Pen addressed Lee.

"Lee." *Pen mentioned.* "You have a visitor."

"You can't just let me die in here you old Wyrn. I have to have my love and potential child torn from me by an usurping replacement, my body broken by a stranger half my size using a switch made from a piece of grass, and humiliated by you like this already... what more injustice must I face?"

"Injustice Lee... what injustice?"

"Do I have to repeat myself? Again? I thought dragons never forgot anything."

"Yes... please... remind me. What injustice have you suffered after breaking the peace in my shrine, nearly killing Madoushi, a guest in my house, inside a ring of honor no less, and having to have been whipped into submission by another guest in my home? What injustices have you felt thus far that I should correct myself from?"

Again Lee was silent for a time.

"When was the last time you fell in love you old wyrm?" *Lee asked, still sprawled against the raised wooden board.*

"The first time I did, it was after years of duty. Years and years of duty, where yes I had females to my bed, but they were brief, and no cubs became of them, but the first woman I ever fell in love with was a virile fem named Anya."

"The sister of Tanya, the Queen of the Russian Tigers." *Pen mentioned and I looked to Pen quickly and then to Lee.*

"Precisely. I held out, I kept myself faithful till I learned later when I tried to see her, that she'd taken a mate and had grown pregnant and had cubs of her own. My faith was decimated... destroyed. She spurned me at her earliest damn convenience. I was just a lay.

"I thought I'd never love again, and yet in that crushing defeat I meet another woman."

"Susan." *Pen replied and again I shot a look between him and Lee.*

"Right. The pain of loss was still forefront in me. I still felt it, still knew of it, so when she challenged me to tell her that I loved her... no matter how much I wanted to say it, no matter how much I wanted to voice it, no matter how poignant the sensation, the words wouldn't leave me. She didn't even see me try, she couldn't see how hard I tried to utter and voice the words. The fact of the matter was that she only cared about *hearing* the words."

“It’s a quirk of the female and a mistake of the male, Lee.” *Pen said.* “She wants to hear it while the male expects that she knows it is an unspoken assumption. But that’s the problem, isn’t it, Lee. You expect it. Expecting only leads to disappointment... in the end... you can only hope. But ask yourself a question, Lee: How do you suppose Susan felt in all this?” *Pen gave him some time to answer. He didn’t.* “But there again is the problem... you didn’t, did you?” *Pen’s words made him wince.* “But to answer your question, the last female I fell in love with romantically, died just under half a million years ago. Your species wasn’t even alive the last time I managed to have romantic affections for another, but despite that, I enjoy the company of women, and have a little more of a knowledge of this alien creature than you do.

“As such, one thing to queue in on is as to how sacred the feminine form considers herself to be. Susan let you inside her, both emotionally and physically. The most precious and guarded place on their bodies aren’t their bottoms or their chests, but their sexes. You mustn’t fully understand the faith she’s given you to let you pierce that point on her body so I’ll explain it.

“I’d liken it unto you allowing a doctor to put on a rubber glove and stick a finger up your anus to look for a medical problem. You hold faith in you that this person you’re letting inside you not to betray you and take advantage of you. Imagine how you’d feel if that doctor did betray you, started violating you... put things in you other than a finger looking for a medical problem.” *Pen let that stand and I found myself nodding to his analogy.* “She had enough affection for you, enough love for you, and profound trust in you to let her inside her. More than once if my understanding is correct. Multiple times even, Lee. That turns into more than just a one night stand, it becomes a relationship. She tells you that she loves you, and yet you couldn’t extend her the same courtesy. Not returning her affections in kind betrayed her.”

“But I tried to!” *Lee said and rose to face us but stopped, staring wide eyed at me.*

“But you didn’t... did you?” *Pen replied in a heart-crushing way.* “In a word, Lee... you betrayed her trust. No matter what the circumstances were, whether subconsciously you didn’t, or subconsciously you were so afraid that you just couldn’t say it, regardless... you didn’t. There was another man who took up the slack in your absence who was there to catch her when she fell away from you, and the difference between you and Madoushi was like the night and day. Madoushi opened himself, let him love her... said the words she wanted to hear from a potential love and mate, and you know what Lee... she chose him.”

Lee was staring at me, unfalteringly as Pen continued his oration, enough to where he lifted his hands to the bars and immediately they began to hiss and sizzle. He didn’t even notice.

“The days of taking a female against her will are over Lee. You do not hit her over the head and drag her away by the hair against her will anymore, nor do you challenge any other suitors she might have to the death and not tell that suitor that it is to the death. These days she chooses her mate, and the decision is hers, not yours. Therein is your greatest failure, Lee. You *hurt* the man she chose to be the father of her child.”

“*Her child?* Then what about my rights?! What about my rights as the father?! She wants to send me away, give me the knowledge that I’ve sired a child and that’s it?! I never get to see that child? I’m just supposed to be sent away and never allowed to raise my son...”

“Daughter.” *I said tersely and rubbed my belly.* “My child is a *girl*.” I said angrily.

“Daughter then. You’d grant me the knowledge of my child being alive and that it exists and it’s mine and then you’d send me away, never to let me see it ever again?! Talk about betrayal and cruelty!”

“If she’s your child, Lee.” Pen replied before I could, and he laid a hand on my arm to calm me. “The probability is low, might I add. But the conversation as to whether or not you will see your child ever again depends upon whether or not you can control yourself, Lee. The mother of this child has deemed that she will not grow up in a tent. Removing a child from the mother is likewise detrimental to a newborn regardless of the sex, so obviously the child will remain with her mother. When the child is older then and only then can you talk of relating with the child at your camp... if it is your child, else wise I can only assume that if you wish to relate with the child then you’ll make yourself available. You will journey here.” And Pen pointed fiercely at the ground with three of his four hands, but only because his fourth hand was holding his staff. Nevertheless, he lifted that staff and stamped it against the ground forcibly to accent his point.

“But, Lee... that will place a question of duties on you. Essentially it would be your decision of what duty is more important. Your position as Warder which means that you must be made available at all times to your tribe... or... to your child, which requires you to leave the camp for prolonged periods all the time, and thereby not be considered as a viable warder any more.

“Historically... you’ve already shown yourself to think more of your tribe than yourself, so if a child were introduced that might be your responsibility, then what are you willing to sacrifice in order to provide for that child?” *Pen’s words drove Lee back like a hammer and he collapsed backward onto his knees, but still held onto the bars while the smell of burnt flesh remained in the air.*

“Think about it.” *Pen mentioned.* “Now... is there anything that you’d like to say to Susan while we’re here?”

Lee looked to me, and then pleadingly... “I’m sorry.”

I looked sternly back at him and then nodded once. “Madoushi and I are getting married, Lee. He’s the one I’ve chosen to be the father. If this is your child, then you better show me that you’re worthy of her.” *I stepped to just before those dangerous bars.* “And I do mean *you* worthy of *her*. If you had any idea how I came about to be with this child that’s in me, Lee... then you’d have an inkling as to why I won’t... will not... ever let you take her from me.

“You think one whit beyond that, and I swear to God I will strangle you to death with my own bare hands you unbelievable murdering fuck.”

“And I’d listen to her Lee...” *Pen added beside me with a raised eyebrow.* “There’s nothing more dangerous than a mother protecting her young.”

“Then what do I need to do? How to I prove myself to you again, Susan.” *Lee managed on the other side. He seemed to be on the verge of tears... Lee... was on the verge of tears.*

“I don’t know.” *I managed.* “But right now... you’re not doing a very good job at it. Look at yourself... you’re in a jail cell with silver bars.”

“To which I’m going to leave you in there till I’m convinced you’re not a danger to the people of my Shrine, Lee... or it’s peace.” *Pen said solidly.* “I lost my temper today because of you... Damn you that I lost my temper... I was getting ready to rip you in half for that, and if not for... someone’s intervention... I would’ve. You have my ire, the ire of an Elder Wyrn, Lee, so understand the dangerous predicament you’ve placed yourself into.” *Pen gave him the evil eye.* “So I’m going to leave you in there for a few weeks just so you can understand just how annoyed I am with

you. I fear that if you get underfoot now, I might squash you out just for the annoyance... like the little bug that you've shown yourself to be." *And Pen made a thumb squashing motion into his other palm to show off the threat.*

I looked at Pen and smirked at how silly it was for a little four foot tall dragon to be threatening a twelve foot were tiger, but nonetheless the threat was real and I nodded curtly at it. "You can start by regaining Pen's trust, Lee." I said immediately. "I don't trust my decisions with you right now."

"W-why not?" Lee asked and I stepped forward and loomed over him.

"Because I want to wring your tawdry neck for what you did to Mady. These bars are currently the only thing keeping you safe from me right now, you're just, it's just..."

Pen planted a hand in my lower back and poked several times with his claws and I calmed.

"Susan... calm yourself. It isn't good for the baby for you to be flush with so many negative emotions and so much adrenaline." Pen mentioned and I closed my eyes and counted to ten and let his acupressure techniques calm me. "Think about what you've done, Lee. I'll return in three weeks and look into your eyes to see if you need another three. And mark my words... so long as I consider you a danger, I'll let you waste away down here. So long as you continue to be your big-headed self, you'll stay in this cell till you either change yourself, or you ask to be sent home.

"And if you ask to be sent home... you are never coming back.

"All in all, I consider you to be a danger to the people in my care right now, and I will not have you running amok.

*"And understand one more thing, Lee. You, a warder, who is sworn to protect... just tried to murder the last of the Thylacines in cold blood. I'll keep this information from the Grand Council of the Lycan for now... primarily to keep the knowledge of Madoushi's existence a secret, but I can assure you, after the mistake that the wolves and lions did against the Thylacines, I can assure you, if they were to find out that there was one left, and you killed him... then it'd be considered a capital offence. You... and your tribe... would be held accountable." *That... wasn't lost on Lee. It meant that the Council would put him to death for such an act, and severely punish his entire tribe.* "Consider your actions Lee. Hopefully you'll come to an overall consensus on how you should live your life from this point forward."*

Pen turned to leave but I paused, staring at Lee. I wanted to hurt him... I wanted to reach through those bars and strangle him... and if not for Anhogamon... he would've done the same thing to Mady, but I doubt he would've stopped.

I wanted him to know what Mady must've felt.

"Susan... it's perhaps best if we return to your room, there's no telling as to when Madoushi will awake again." Pen said quietly.

"You're right." I said tersely toward Lee and he shrunk from me. "There is no telling when he'll awake again." And I turned on my heel, confident that Pen would cage that beast until he either shaped up and accepted my choices, or was sent away.

I am Madoushi.

This shaman's knowledge and magic were incredible and powerful. I'd not had proper instruction for most of my existence... what I did know was all trial and error. Within the time that I sat at his feet, learning what he knew on just this first 'lesson' I'd already doubled what I knew. Healing was the most important of his lessons, walking the Dreamtime was the other.

He led me about as the sun fell and set, the two of us walking naked together as I was given a shamanic pouch as my initiation.

And I was growing stronger by the moment. It was a subtle expression as I walked like a child in comparison to this shaman, but nevertheless, with each word he uttered I learned more, and I grew from it till the Shaman excused himself and went on a brief walkabout.

"Pendragon... if you only knew..." I said as I smeared black paint that I was told to prepare using the four fingers of either hand to make streaks against my chest. "Perhaps you already did know... or perhaps not."

"Know... what?" Pen's voice uttered, and I spasmed briefly as an eyelid of the great dragon surrounding the shrine opened, and an enormous green glowing disk shifted to look upon me. "Ah... Madoushi. There you are."

"Y-you can see me? But I thought..."

"I'm an old dragon, Madoushi. I'm a very, very old dragon. Not much gets by me anymore." And Pen lifted his head and leveled it onto me, his eyes like two half slivers of green moon illuminating the field I was in. "Though admittedly... I didn't see what Lee would do to you. Susan will be relieved to no small account." Pen looked from side to side and then back down at me. "She is rather anxious, Madoushi. When do you intend to return?"

I sat down in the long grasses and exhaled.

"I don't know how I got here let alone how to leave, Pendragon. I am being helped."

Pen blinked and shook his great head in surprise. "Helped? By whom?"

"I... cannot tell you." I said and looked away.

"I see. Secrets don't keep in the Dreamtime, Madoushi." Pen mentioned and then settled his head down, curling about the shrine again as his long antennae twitched before he yawned and the wind in the world blew strongly toward his mouth. "But I'll tell Susan that you are trying to make your way home."

"Thank you." I replied and the silence in the world after he went back to sleep, or that part of him went back to sleep was palpable.

But strange... was he existing simultaneously in both these worlds? Could I do that? But then the sounds of a didgeridoo sounded and rising and turning, found that my new teacher was back from his walkabout, and gathering up the inking implements I returned to him for more lessons.

I am Fellania, and whew! What intense goings on lately.

Sue's man gets half-strangled to death by Lee, Lee gets his butt whooped by Sue, then Pen, then Anho... and then Anho again, and what was more is that Anho is half Lee's size and an eighth his mass! *Still* Anho beat Lee up using only but a switch of grass! Ha!

I couldn't help it... I was proud of my man. But then I stopped and thought for a moment.

"My Man." I said aloud.

Oh that made me blush... it was wonderful thinking that I had a man in the first place even as I rid myself of all my clothes. There was very little I could do at the moment to help the situation beyond the herbs and ointments and some healing magic I already knew, so the only avenue left to me at the moment was to just try to just continue living my own life.

Pendragon ran a shrine, and it was one of those shrines that was opened to the public and was reputed to help develop a refined sense of ease and comfort. A Shrine of Peace, as it was so repeatedly deigned to be. But one of the things that he ran was a bath house... fed from the natural hot springs that ran along the base of the mountain of Mount Fuji. The natural hot spring waters from the pure earth below, surrounded in an authentic Japanese exterior bathhouse decor had drawn me to them before; I just never got the chance till now to use them. Though I was open about nudity as a werebear, I was a little prudish when it came to my softer human body. I didn't want to bathe out in the open where others could see me, so in the chaos I thought that now would be a good time to enjoy a nice hot bath, have some hot sake and relax without having to share the waters with anyone else.

So stripping naked of the many layers of clothing and garments I wore, gripping a large towel and not bothering with a robe, I padded from the changing rooms into the first and largest of the baths, a great naturally formed pool of stone with a sandy bottom and multiple submerged marble slabs. This was the communal area, where males and females bathed together. There were two separate houses for the sexes to be separated, but this, the largest of them all, was where I wanted to be... all to myself.

But the natural beauty of the place didn't end with the obsidian basin and the hot sands under the water... oh no-no-no! Pen was apparently a rather classy guy when it came to comfort.

Lilies and cat-grass in the pool surround by bamboo grass around the pool gave this place a shaded obscured look. The haze hanging over the waters gave it a mystical look, and at any moment I was certain that a Ki'rin would come up and drink from the pool.

Placing the towel on a side bench and gripping a pitcher before drawing water from the pool, I squatted beside the pool and dipped the pitcher before pouring its contents directly over my head to pre-wet myself. I repeated that three times, with the second down my back and the third right over my breasts – I laughed at that, watching the water form rivers about the mountains and valleys of my bodice – before I slid into the pool itself, sliding forward and swimming across the shallow waters to one of the deeper submerged basins, and once there I began to bathe.

Cherry blossoms falling into the water from some of the trees scented the water... incense lamps filled the air with subtle fragrances that allowed the mind to relax, and as I used some of the scraping tools to scrape the dead skin and dirt away from me, I looked upon in appreciation at a body that was decidedly greater than any Bloodclaw before me.

This was perhaps the first time that I'd had a chance to appreciate the changes that'd happened to me since leaving Lea Monde. The muscular definition in my arms and the prime cleaving and separation of musculature wrapped in

thick veins across every inch of me that my gloriously feminine body had achieved filled me with confidence that I could do far more than ever before. Thick imposing biceps, thick cloven shoulders and horseshoe triceps leading to flaring and chorded forearms. Bulging pectorals that carried two basketball sized mammaries that were heavy with creamy milk that, despite their impressive weights, still managed to float in the water.

My fingers caressed as much as they washed and cleaned, using a shaved bit of bamboo to slide against my skin and scrape off the film of dead skin from off my body, and the last thing I did was to dip my head and swim in the broad bowl for a little bit longer again, just a surface swim... starting out under water before coming up again near to the shore and laying there in the sand and resting my head atop my heaving muscular arms while my breasts pressed into the sandy ground and spread the sand beneath me. A massively massive feminine back broader than even Sue's, and two tightly packed mounds of bottom rose up out of the water along with my upper bodice.

It was nice being surrounded by so much heat... it made the strength of my own sexual heat actually seem soothing. Right then and there was the first time I felt truly relaxed since that damned heat began.

But laying in water meant you were relatively still. Sure your muscle twitches created a certain degree of disturbance in the water, as did your heart beating likewise sent an audible throb through the whole of the pool you were in, but I wasn't moving that much. So when a ripple in the water spread across me, getting me to open my eyes, I turned onto my side and looked for the intruder.

Immediately, I saw no one... but that was immediately.

And then I saw the blue-gray eyes staring at me from out of the weeds in the shade and shadows that hid him from the shrine's light.

I turned onto my back and folded both legs together, instinctively protecting and hiding my womanhood as my eyes adjusted, and I pursed my lips at the sight of Anhogamon sitting on a stone near a cherry tree at the edge of the pool, half submerged in the pool and hidden amidst the cat grass but nonetheless naked as well. Long unbound hair fell about his face with the gray over either ear, those feral eyes of his piercing through the darkness and looking at me... hungrily. I was his prey...

"Anho..." I managed and sat up, my breasts rolling heavily about my pecs and ribs while I folded my legs more tightly together... not to hide them from him... well not entirely. I was growing aroused... nipple and areola puffing and erecting outward along with labia and clitoris. I was moistening... but thankfully the water hid that. "H-how long have you been there?"

As a lady I needed to hide my sex from him, but there was another part of me, my first-mother's part of me, that wanted me to spread those legs open, flare them wide like a butterfly's wings and let him in... let him ravage me like a... like a...

"Since before you arrived." He answered suddenly and then stood up.

I tried not to look, tried not to so much as even glance at that wang of his, but it... drew my vision to it. And when I looked I couldn't look away, felt my lips pursing, felt my eyes bulging. For such a little guy, he was nonetheless... swinging thick and low.

Nipples clenched even harder and I sank further into the water so that the first beads of milk from them diffused into the water while my sex swelled and billowed outward to deep-throated moaning thickness as I bit my lower lip and clenched those loins to keep back the rising orgasm.

Suddenly the heat of the pool wasn't overriding the heat in my body.

I watched it sway and swing like a pendulum as he waded into the deep end, the bulbous telescope bouncing off his thighs and brushing against the weeds like a baby elephant... looking for peanuts! Mph! Mph again!! He traipsed through the weeds and back out again, still carrying the sheathed sword of his that he rested against his body as he came to sit down on one of the marble benches.

With his unit submerged and me sitting there, I realized that I was totally naked before him, and though there was the reaction to cover myself I managed to defeat this reaction, but since there was also the reaction to throw myself at him, display all my naughty bits, I resisted that action as well. I wanted him to look upon me, wanted him to take pleasure in me, and flashes of memories of kisses and touches, a couple of the moments of penetration came to me from my first mother, and I creamed a little and gave a shuddering gasp and a shiver from the micro orgasm.

Anhogamon did that to me with his very presence...

Luckily the moisture distilled into the pool's water immediately.

"You were watching me?" I asked, and shifting slightly, thighs moving together from side to side as I slid into the pool before kneeling and crawling forward, I kept that sex of mine hidden from him in one way or another as I neared. My breasts... my faith, my growing love for him overpowered me, and I showed enough faith to him to let him see those openly, see their greatness, see their size and weight; it was a step I was all to glad to take.

"I was." He replied, straight and to the point as ever. Some might call only doing whatever is necessary and nothing else was lazy. As a matter of fact, in Anho's realm it was called being precise. In a different world he might've been a surgeon. He possibly was now based upon how exacting he was with a blade – or in the case of Lee earlier this evening, a semblance of a blade – in his hand.

"And what do you think of what you've observed, my sweet lord?" I replied, almost cooed, feeling suddenly overly self-conscious. His approval at that moment seemed to be the utmost important thing that'd ever come to me in my whole life.

"You're stronger than she was." He replied simply. "A lot stronger." He glanced over me then. "But your breasts have yet to grow into her glory."

I looked down at my chest and blinked before looking up at him. I thought my breasts were huge! How big-chested was my first-mother?

"Does this form give you pleasure to look at, Anho...gamon?"

I was supposed to be formal. Sure I referred to him as Anho with Pen, but I was supposed to call him by his full name when I was speaking directly with him. I was certain that he caught my slip of the tongue, but he gave no notice of it.

"It does." He mentioned and my eyes flickered again. As sick as it sounded, I wanted him to pop a boner right then and there, but I suppose his self-control was that fine where he didn't let it. Wish mine was that fine... but then again he wasn't rutting right now, and I was in this damned heat! Oh Anho... just take me... just take me into your arms and... and I swallowed hard, feeling myself lean toward him. I wanted to kiss those lips, feel my breasts against his chest, his erection in my loins. Ngh! Ngh again!

“That’s good. I…”

“I spent what felt like an age before I found Fellania Bloodclaw,” he began and I shut up immediately. “My hair wasn’t gray when I began my quest,” and he gestured to the stylings over his ears. “I’d been journeying as a mercenary, protecting the daughter of a Lord that had his manor and village decimated by warlords. The caravan we were protecting was fallen upon as we moved over the mountain and I was… cut down from sheer numbers. Your first mother found me and took pity on me. She tended to me. I’m alive because of her.”

“I’m alive because of you… apparently.” I replied to that and rose to my knees before him.

Though this made more of me visible, it still kept my sex mostly hidden between my thighs. I wanted him… Oh I wanted this short, sexy creature, but I wanted him to come to me. I didn’t want to appear like a slut, so I would hold myself in the same sort of dignified way that my mother’s, mother’s mothers did.

“Indeed.” He replied. “So how do I look at you, since you’re my… offspring?”

“Pen explained it that my blood has been so diluted, that there’s nothing left of the blood you put into it. Thousands of other fathers mating with thousands of my mothers essentially makes me as far from you as my first mother was in the first place.”

“So it is.” He commented and the barest wisp of a smile crossed his face as his gaze lowered just a smidgeon to look more upon my breasts. Those eyes of his… *lingered*… and they were hungry. “Why don’t you sit here with me then, Fellania?” and he gestured beside him. “And we can speak for awhile.”

Success! I was being asked to have polite conversation! This was the first step in… in… I had no damned idea how many steps there were at the moment, but this was the first step in a proper relationship. The fact that we were naked together in a bath made no matter, and luckily, the heat of the water and the fact that I was already reddened from it hid the blush I suddenly got as I rose to my feet before him. This let him see my sex, another leap of faith for me, but also at this angle I could see his. Mph!

But I went to sit beside him, and crossing my legs I turned to him and smiled, trying to look pretty despite having no makeup and everything was unbound and I was naked. There was a terse moment of silence; I knew Anho was a quiet one, so I decided to perhaps try to break the ice.

“Tell me of your home time, Anhogamon. I’d love to know of the world my first-mothers lived and breathed in.”

I am Madoushi.

The Dreamtime was a curious place, curious because you are born into a lie. You spend most of your life living a lie. That’s not to say that the ‘real’ world is bad, but you shouldn’t expect that a world of illusions that all of us live in will tell you even a part of the whole truth at times. Your eyes lie to you at all times. Take a corner of a room where you’re looking at the apex of three rooms. Your mind reminds you that that corner is made up with two walls and a ceiling that all come together at a ninety degree angle, but those angles look a lot broader than ninety degrees when you look at it. Or how about a six foot man seen at a distance… he looks like he’s about three inches tall at a certain distance, but you know that man is six feet tall.

Your eyes lie to you. All your senses lie to you, others can make your senses lie to you to give a false impression.

It was all a matter of perspective.

The Dreamtime was the utter truth of things, lies laid bare. Take that Pendragon fellow. In the real world he was four feet tall, but in the Dreamtime he was an all-encompassing force of draconic might coiled about the entirety of his shrine which was like a palace from all the power welded into it.

Though I was confident in my defensive abilities, having spent the past three hundred years trying to defend myself against the effects of a nightmare realm like Deadwood, where the Dreamtime held monsters called The Denizens, bloodthirsty madmen and women forcibly altered into the guardians of a living house wrought by necromancy and vampiric blood arts... yea... I could defend myself in the Dreamtime all right.

Regardless, I'd learned more in that short time in the Dreamtime with that nameless shaman than I'd learned in all those past three hundred years. If I knew now what I knew then, then perhaps I wouldn't have died every six days in a most gruesome way. But then again if I did then I'd've never have met Sue.

But nonetheless, the nameless shaman had given me a couple of tasks after his teachings. The first was to dream back into the Dreamtime using certain techniques he taught. The second was to delve his real name. Each task would reward me with added knowledge when we met again and again, but for now... it was time to return to the waking world.

Strange... to think that the world of dreams was the reality and reality was the world of dreams...

So I strode into Master Pendragon's shrine, decorated with paint on my face and body, a medicine bag hanging before my loins, and within it were the stuff of dreams. These arts, if lost from the body, would help me get back to my body, help me reclaim the union of the dream and the reality.

Into the shrine and up the stairs and down the halls, into the rooms where I woke up before, onto the grand and comfortable bed I went, and laying down I closed my eyes... and went to sleep inside a dream.

I am Sue.

Lee had made me frazzled and frustrated, made me angry, so very, very angry. I'd never considered in my genteel ways to think about strangling the life out of someone before now... but... but... I don't know. Maybe I was mostly angry at him for how he'd treated me. I'd opened my heart and my body to him and he didn't do so in return. Perhaps that was the sting that hurt the most, and now that I'd become some *prize* between him and Madoushi, despite that I've made it clear that I'd chosen Madoushi, Lee had gone and done that.

I sighed and looked down upon Mad where he'd lain still and motionless on the bed there for the past many hours, and as I ran my nails through his hair... suddenly he stirred!

I'd been staring so intently at him that at first I missed it, and then realized that he really hadn't moved till now, and I hoped that was a good sign. I'd been sitting here, hugging myself and him for the longest time, biceps pressing both breasts together as I absentmindedly rubbed the muscled layer of belly muscles that were still hard and carved into heaving feminine pads of strength, like a protective cage of muscle that guarded my womb, in which a most precious little girl was growing into a new body.

Mady stopped moving in his stir and I sighed, continuing to comb his mane with one hand and palm my belly with the other.

She needed a new name. Not Jenny or Alice, definitely not Pandora... those were old lives that were best done with. She needed a new name that didn't so much as even hint that she'd once been the young woman tricked into opening the box in which all the evils of the world had been stored.

I'd never met a Fae, but if I ever did I'd... I'd pop them right in the mouth for what they'd done to my little girl.

I sighed again and began to move, rising first and lifting hands to the clasps binding my chest and keeping the maternity robe on about me, pulling it off my muscular shoulders before I slid out of the panties binding my loins before sitting to remove both leggings.

Rising again and stretching long and hard, I slid over to my Madoushi and shifted, changing into the imperiously muscled super fem with the row upon row of thickly developing and milk-filled tits before I lifted Mady's head and placed it onto one of my muscular thighs close to my belly.

This marked the first night that he and I wouldn't say goodnight to each other amidst torrid lovemaking. Regardless, I combed his mane with my claws and purred up a storm, churning with muscular power while my tail flicked at its end.

"You're a sight." Mentioned a softly mewling voice and I turned to see Mew approaching with a bottle of cream in her hand. Her tummy was thick and she was walking with her toes turned in for balance. "That big Lee fellow beat up your male? If you ask me, I'd go for the stronger of the two mates. It guarantees stronger kittens."

"Is that how you chose Ivan?" I asked her with a smirk.

"Ivan was the most powerful choice." Mew returned before sipping at the cream. "For more ways than one..." And then she came to the foot of the bed and then teetered before flopping onto her rump with legs bending open wide before she had to adjust herself to get her tail out from under her. "Oof... not long now." She mentioned and rubbed her tummy.

"What do you mean... in more ways than one?" I asked her.

"Well... you know... he's strong, he's powerful..." she fingered the lip of the bottle she carried. "He can pleasure me rather expertly..."

I pursed my lips to keep from smiling and raised an eyebrow. "Which is what Mady does for me. Yeah Lee is big and strong, but he doesn't... *pleasure*... me as well as Mady does, and Mady has more magic in his little pinkie finger than Lee has in his whole body."

"And yet Lee still battered his way through Madoushi's power to get at him."

"Hush Mew, I've chosen Madoushi and that's that. It's his seed in me and not Lee's... I know it."

And what if it's Lee's seed, Susan?" Mew asked, which echoed the concern I'd held for the past couple weeks. "What if Lee is the sire? What then?"

“Madoushi is to be the father.” I told her. “There is more to being a father than just pumping a load of jism into a female’s womb, Mew. There are more qualities than just be the biggest and strongest.” I looked sidelong at her. “And you can’t fool me Mew. You didn’t choose Ivan simply because he could make you a magical kitty too or that he was the biggest and the strongest... you like him don’t you?”

“He’s sufficient for my needs.”

“Sufficient?” I smirked.

“All right so I love the big lug... you happy?!” she growled with flattened ears and I giggled. “The way he rolls those R’s and is all gentlemanly all the time... a girl has to have her selfish desires, and how easy is it to find a guy that fills them all? I feel like a posh, spoiled little kitty, and that’s precisely where I want to be. And you would too if you could help it.”

“We all would.” I agreed. “But we aren’t all in a perfect life, Mew.” I said and lay back amidst the great pillows, my great swollen mammaries rolling against my chest as I rubbed Madoushi’s head with one hand and my belly with the other.

“Well don’t you worry... it’ll all turn out ok in the end.”

“How... how will it turn out ok?” I asked.

Mew shrugged. “I don’t know... it’s a mystery.”

I am Pendragon, and I was being given some troubling news.

“Sen told me something disturbing Remy. What do you mean we are at war?”

“I have to leave, Master Pendragon. The Wererats have a contract on me. One of my Grandfather’s own assassins, his private usage assassins, came to kill me.”

“So he’s underhanded as well, hm?” *I mentioned.*

“What do you mean?”

“I purchased you.” *I told him.* “For your freedom. He accepted the money... apparently he thinks that he can cheat a dragon.”

“You... paid him? For *me*? W-why... why would you do that?”

“You were a large part of it Remy, but I didn’t purchase your contract just for your benefit. You are a major stone in a bridge I am building, and I would have you free of another’s ownership before I dare ask your aide in other things. Apparently your grandfather is more of an asshole than I originally considered him to be.”

“Pen... do you... have any idea how foolish *buying* me was?” *Remy asked me.* “I’m a rouge! Everyone around me is in danger now. I’m too dangerous not to be under my grandfather’s thumb. He’d rather see me dead than be used against him now. I know too much of his organization.”

“Nevertheless... he broke a contract.” *I stated and bounced the edge of my staff against Lilly’s thickened thigh as she cradled me in her lap, purring loudly and grooming my short mane with her tongue comb. As prudish as she was, I was nonetheless contented to have her attentions like that.* “This deal didn’t go as I thought it might, Remy, and to that I apologize for inconveniencing you.”

“Pen... this place...”

“Is perfectly safe, Remy. Please don’t let on that you know otherwise.”

There was quiet between us before Lilly lifted her head and shook her mane. “Master Remy, if you leave then you’ll never get to see Sen-Sen again. Mew.” *She mentioned and I looked up at her. She purred and scritched my head while the bell on its garter belt around her thigh jingled lightly. She started purring louder.*

“Indeed.” *I mentioned and looked back to Remy.* “Does she mean anything to you?”

Remy had been standing, wrapped with both arms around his body as he stepped to and fro, pacing nervously.

“Master Pendragon... you’ve given me more money than I could ever know what to do with. I’d be willing to give it all back if you would give me Sen.”

“I’d gladly make that transaction Remy... but she’s not mine to give so that’s not a bargain I can make.”

Remy snapped his head to me. “But... I thought...”

“That I owned her? I’m a dick, not an asshole, Remy. I don’t enslave servants. I will indenture servants from time to time, but I don’t enslave. Sen arrived on my doorstep inside a little basket, Remy. I raised her like any other student here... as if they’re a member of my immediate family. It’s worked out for countless millennia, and I’m not about to stop now. She is free and has her own mind to do whatever she chooses.”

“So... you... didn’t send her to me to...”

“Placate you? I told you before Remy... I did nothing of the sort. She has continued to abide with you by her own volition. And likewise... like I told you earlier... she has a secret that is her reason for doing so. Have you discovered what that thing is yet?”

Remy slowly shook his head and I nodded.

“Then suffice it to say. It’s a reason that any woman would stay with any man forever and ever. It’s an endearing quality, a double edged sword as it were, for sometimes this reason winds a woman up in an abusive situation, but with you... and all your loving, gentlemanly ways... I think she could do a lot worse and still be in just an everyday relationship.”

“Won’t you tell me?” *Remy asked.*

“I told you that as well, Remy. It’s not my secret, so it’s definitely not my place to tell you. It would undermine Sen for me to tell you, and I would never betray her trust like that.”

Lilly began to open her mouth and I gripped her wrist and shook it to get her attention. I knew she was about to blurt out the reason. She was innocent enough not to understand that secrets needed to remain secrets. She looked at me and I shook my head at her and she closed her mouth quickly. Remy definitely noticed the exchange. I'd have to explain to Lilly as soon as he left that secrets needed to remain secret.

“Then how do you propose that I learn of this secret Master Pendragon?” *Remy asked tersely.*

“Have you asked her yet?” *I asked him and he fell silent and I nodded. “I see... you don't trust her yet.”*

“What?!”

“It's true.” *I managed and looked at my claws. “That or you're afraid.”*

“What would I be afraid of?!”

I slid my eyes toward him to look him directly in the face. “That when you learn of her secret... that you will no longer have the ability to run from her.” I let him mill this over. His face took a desperate look to it. “Or... Remy... think of it that you will no longer have reasons to leave... but rather... you will now have reasons to stay. And should you leave this place without learning it, know that I will mention you as the biggest coward I've ever met for the rest of my days. And I'm a dragon... that could be for a long... long time.”

“Coward?! How dare you call me that?!”

“Well you are on the verge of being called that, Remy.” *And I lay back in Lilly's lap and rested against her muscled belly as she cuddled me again. I was merely aching from the knife wound from Remy's grandfather, but still... she carried me around like I was her dolly. “I mean... most men, after being told that their woman loves them but the reason why is a secret, would've done everything in their power to learn of that secret. So... what are you afraid of?”*

“Don't think your reverse psychology will work on me Pendragon.” *He growled at me, his large rounded ears flattening against his head.*

“What do you mean think? It is working. No matter how hard you'll try not to let it bother you... it will. And unless you want to be thought of as a coward, or as an asshole like your grandfather, you'll persevere that issue to the very end. Oh it'll take a bit before it sets in, but there's no use trying to hold off on it. The sooner you delve into that secret, the freer you'll be, and if you leave my shrine, and garner for yourself the labels of asshole and coward, you'll forever have that thought stuck in your head, for all time, till the very day you die... and when your life flashes before your eyes, you will feel that regret greater than any other in your life.”

“Mew!” *Lilly beamed and nodded vigorously to make the bell on her thigh jingle.*

“You know what Pen... you are a dick.”

“I know.” *I smirked. “Now get out of here... I have defensive preparations I need to make.”*

It was the story of one thing led to another.

I sat beside Anho as we began talking. I moved my hands closer to his by placing them on my knee, he turned to me and later he clasped my wrist. I then clasped the back of his hand and unfolded my crossed legs and turned even more fully, feeling my breasts brush against his arm. The connection renewed the clenching in my erect nipples, and I shivered from the contact. Then while I was telling him of my life story, I dared to straddle the bench, letting him see my sex blurred through the water, my undulating breasts wobbling while the water lapped about our waists. We drew closer, I touched his chest, he touched mine and his touch was like fire against the curvature of my tit.

And then he touched my face, cradling it, and then... well...

I wondered if Sue had been in this position before... it was the terse moments right before copulation, the moment when a man and a woman fell in love with each other enough to attempt a union. For such a little guy, Anhogamon was surprisingly strong, strong enough to keep me on his lap, and with my breasts cleaving to the sides of his body and sweat leaking from me to keep my flesh above the water glistening, the smell of cherry blossoms and the spring water mixed with my pheromones during a heat to make the smell around me alluring... even for my senses. His hand pressed into the fat of my tit, sinking into the thick flesh surrounding milk laden mammary while my nipples leaked their cream and my sex leaked its nectar. My legs kept widening till my pussy was against his hard abs, and I felt the thick meat of an erection rising beneath me, pressing against my taint and bottom, and we were moving... jostling amidst kissing, starting the loving embrace, making love with our faces first.

He cupped the front of my tit, encircled the nipple and areola with one of his hands as I jostled, shimmied a little bit, moaned nasally while attempting to get his tip into me. I bit my lower lip between kisses, felt light-headed, my feminine body overpowering my reason, making me weak to such simple things as gravity, and slowly I began to fall backward, lowering to my rump onto the bench, legs flaring steadily wider to show the tightness of my tendons as they pulled open the folds of my swollen womanhood, disgorged my flowers stamen and fleshy pink petals.

All of this was being done subconsciously, my breasts rolling to the edges of my arms, cleaving to his sides while I sighed from his expert touches upon those breasts... and my thoughts kept repeating *'put it in... put it in... oh Great Maker put it in!'* inside my head. Oh he knew how to kiss, knew how to touch, and I was swooning... rocking backward toward my back, legs spread to their fullest now, open... inviting him inside me while the labial muscles swelled and spread open just as invitingly.

He was the bee to my flower and his stinger was poised. Almost... almost... put it in my dear love...

"Ngh... put it in..." I moaned and rocked back onto my back to be half-submerged in the water, my sex rising above the water briefly, feet on the bench now, and he rose, palmed that sex, caressed it, slid a finger up and down the crevice to caress the clitoris and add pressure to it.

It sent a wave from my sex to the tip of my nose that got me to roll orgasmically.

He was the first person other than myself to touch it, and the sensation wrought a micro orgasm from me. He rose over me, hands pressing into my breasts over the fattened and swollen areola and the hardened nipples leaking their milk. He bent to kiss me, I accepted it, sucked for more and felt his nads against my sex.

Almost! Almost! Almost... there...

And he was sliding forward, the tip of the head of his engorged erection pressing against the gapped opening of my sex, I felt its heat, felt him begin to penetrate, felt the lips of my sex spreading open to him, and then...

“Yee-haw!” a high-pitched squeal said and we both rose with a sloshing of water, and a cloud of little fairy dragons flew in and cannon-balled into the water, splashing and swimming about, some running across the water like water bugs and throwing water balls at each other.

“N-no... no-no-NO-**NO!** Damn it! Go away you little pests!!” I snarled, supremely angry as my moment of sexual relief was nigh and was now dashed. This was going to be the perfect moment! This was going to be the day I stopped being a maiden and finally got to make love! This was the perfect moment!!

“Heh! Make us lumpy!” one speckled blue male giggled happily.

“Lumpy... while you little...”

I had to admit... as I twisted and rushed after the little buggers, I have to tell you that I usually don't lose my temper like this... but what would anyone do after dreaming for so long of the perfect moment, nearly had a better moment than that dreamed moment, only to have it ruined by the world's worst pests? Again, this isn't me, but I rushed after the multi-colored fairy dragons, making a grab for them, but they flew laughing away from my hands even as I shifted forms and tried to catch them in my bigger hands, only to be rewarded by a half dozen of them or more flying in and spitting in my face while still others now pelted me with water balls.

By the way... did you know that Fairy Dragon Spit was exactly like spider silk? So yeah... that stuff clung like a full bag of freshly chewed Big Chew in your fur. I pulled out some rather painful hairs from my face in an attempt to shout at them.

“You little bastards! Go away! You're ruining everything!”

“Hey... we resemble that remark!” the speckled blue said from atop the cherry tree, balancing on tip toe on several of the leaves. “What's the matter, lumpy, can't you take a joke or has all that muscle and tit squeezed the off blood to your brain... *stupid!*”

“Grah!” I shrieked and splashed water up the tree at him but he giggled irritatingly and flew up out of the spray. I was on the verge of tears. This was going to be my moment! I was about to join with him! He and I were about to be one! Damn it!

“Hee Hee! We know you lumpy. You're Fellania of the Bloodclaw! The muscley muscleist muscle-thing there ever was! Stupid, stupid bear people! Hee-hee! And your man there... the one with the exclamation point on his pelvis... he's Any-Anhogamon!”

“Pshaw... Anhogamon... what the hell kind of name is that? Is he a Pokemon?”

“No! He's a CHIM-Pokemon.” A pink female said and the cloud of fairy dragons giggled insanely with laughter and I growled louder than ever as they now made fun of my love. “What's his super power... your nuts in his mouth?! Hee-hee!”

I was definitely crying now, sobbing even, and I roared at them and they mocked fear.

South Park had once done an episode making fun of the Pokémon genre by calling them Chimpokemon. What most of the target audience didn't know was that *'Chimpo'* in Japanese was a dirty word meaning penis. Making fun of me was one thing, making fun of Anho was another.

I was crying as I snarled up at the little buggers out of my range to swat, and I didn't think to summon a blast of wind to push them down to me, but then I didn't have to. There was a crack of movement and Anho appeared for a fraction of a second before with a single sweeping swing of a figure eight, he swatted first the blue and then the pink fairy dragon using the flat of his blade so that the two were spiked face first into the water. There were two loud slaps as they belly flopped the water and then started to sink into it, as Anho glided downward and landed atop the water, balancing atop it even and walked toward the two fairy dragons with his... um... croppy flopping.

I blinked, pursing my lips as he passed me with a stern look on his face, and bending down, he gripped first one and then the other fairy dragon out of the water and gripped them by their wings, and then lifting them up before me, he snapped his sword edge beneath their wings and held them out before me.

"Fairy dragons are rather weak at the joints of their wings... so easily *de-tached!*" Anho emphasized that last word. "So unless you'd like me to render you both flightless... you'll apologize."

The other fairy dragons, their brothers and sisters, were all hiding wide-eyed well out of reach.

"Oh please kind master... not our wings." The blue mentioned and Anho twisted his sword to cause them some discomfort. "Ah! OK! I'm sorry!"

"We're sorry!" the pink added.

"Forgive us." They said in unison and palmed their four palms together pleadingly.

I poked them both in the chests. "Apology accepted so long as you never do it again. And let this be a lesson to you all! Anhogamon is not a Pokémon, or a Chimpokemon, he is a warrior! Warriors have honor and honor impugned must be paid... in blood!"

"Waa! We're sorry!" the pair cried and each balled into a fetal position, rubbing their eyes. "Forgive us!"

I gave a curt nod and Anho tossed them to the shore and the pair bounced, flipped over immediately and fled with the rest of their brothers and sisters... leaving a very terse and very quiet moment between Anho and me.

The moment was destroyed.

"My apologies." Anho mentioned, and I noted that even though I was ankle deep and he was standing on the water at the moment, he was actually at my crotch height. "It is rare that a female must defend my honor... but I am nevertheless grateful. In my time... for a woman to be so outspoken as to protect her male was an honor." He gripped his scabbard from where it lay and with a flourish he sheathed the blade within the sheathe with a click. I found myself staring at his junk. "I thank you for the night Lady Fellania."

Back to formalities. SHIT!

I blinked and looked up at him... well... rather lifted my eyes more, I had no choice but to look down to see him. "Wait... you're leaving?"

"I must. I shall not impugn your honor any further than I already have, Lady Fellania."

"Y-you... impugn my... well... I didn't think you were. I mean you could... just a little?" I asked timidly, hoping to renew the moment. "I enjoyed your company immensely. Couldn't you stay just for a little while?" I sat down on

the marble slab and it was driven into the base of the basin within the sand. The waters didn't even nearly cover my lap now.

His eyes lowered slightly as I sat, and though it were my breasts or my sex he was looking at... I didn't care, I nonetheless gave him a little more of a chub and I was happy for that. I found myself for the first time desiring to suck a man's dick and swallow whatever he gave me. At least once anyways...

"It was a lovely night, I'm glad that I could learn of you more than I have before." He approached and I lifted my hands to embrace him but he stepped no closer than what was necessary to lean over my breasts – having to lie against them really – and kiss me lightly on the mouth. He lingered... just a bit... but it was enough to make me half swoon. "I want to learn more of you." He replied and stood, and again I glanced at his junk and mildly licked my lips as I imagined it going in various ways into me. It got me hot and sweaty all over again... especially since it'd thickened to a point *just* before it'd start to arch upward and harden. "Would you join me for breakfast tomorrow?" he asked and cradled my chin in one hand so that I'd look up.

The vision of that mature face and those blue-gray eyes looking hungrily upon me as if I were his prey... it made my nipples harden till they ached and leaked their cream. I cupped both breasts with either hand and pressed them in as I blushed so hard it shone through the fur of either cheek, across my nose and over either tit. It was a definitely noticeable thing... especially on a werebear like me.

I wanted to ask him to stay with me tonight, but instead I said: "I'd love to." I mentioned a little girlishly. I felt stupid, hypnotized by his gaze, I wanted to swoon and felt light-headed.

"In the morning then." He said, and there was a little rumble in his throat... a barest trace of a purr?

And then Anhogamon bowed and strode out of the pool, taking hold of a robe and a pair of Japanese Sandals – the ones with the two slats underneath the platforms to keep a body above the muddy ground – and he strode out of the bathhouse while still donning the robe.

"Ah damn it..." I pouted and kicked at the water, sending a great wave that made a frog or two leap into the water lest they be swept off their lily pads.

I am Sue...

It was late and I'd nodded off. I'd lain with Madoushi, his head pillowed on one of my breasts now till I'd nodded off, and it was finger caresses on my other tit that woke me. Opening my eyes and looking down, I found Mady's eyes open, and my heart gave a leap of excitement as I saw him awake as he fingered the fat, rounded and milk-laden tit, tracing the border between fur and areola and then areola and nipple, enticing it to leak cream. Goose bumps rose up on me to prickle the areola and erect the teat harder as he played with my tit, milk leaking from the sunken duct in the fleshy nib that would soon feed our daughter.

"I've never considered my breasts to be so fascinating before." *I commented and he lifted his eyes to me.*

"I've never truly seen it before." *He commented and I chuckled incredulously, surprised at the comment.*

He's seen them before. He suckled from it almost daily, cupped them, cradled them, used them to pleasure himself with as I gave him a blow job... that sort of thing.

“You’ve seen them before...” I laughed, and he rose, strangely lithely now... as if nothing had happened. But likewise, it seemed as if he’d been enjoying the touching of my breast, because that thick dick came up achingly after him and he took absolute precision as he cupped my breasts with either hand. And where did he get that satchel from?

“My eyes have been opened like they never have been before. My perception has been altered... I see... things... I’ve never seen before. Even tactile senses like touch tell me different things than they used to.” He touched my tit and chuckled, and his penis surged thicker. “What I felt before was the lie, this... this is the truth.” And he hefted my breasts, felt their weight while his erection, now it was no longer pressured beneath him, continued to arch and rise while his balls dropped and swelled.

I blinked at it... why did it seem to be getting bigger than I remember it being?

He bent and kissed my tits, kissed the teats and I felt his hands part my legs as I blushed as his head lifted to kiss my lips, and with me already laying back I felt dizzy as his and my hands laced with each other as he knelt between my sizeable legs. I was panting from his kiss, I felt light-headed. Why did it feel so much more real than I ever remember?

“S-something’s... different...” I murmured and tasted his lips again as he pressed solidly against my breasts with his ropy chest.

“Something is different.” He mused. “I know what’s real now.” And then he bent and penetrated me deftly, and I moaned, curling my toes, as the intensity of the sensation delved its way electrically up my loins as he slid deep, deep inside me, nads on my bottom as he continued erecting, filling my woman-hole tightly to the brim. It was so real that almost immediately I yowled in ecstasy and came, my breasts leaking milk in taut little jets against his chest as he kissed me over and over again.

‘I must still be dreaming’ I murred to myself, and unfolded open to allow him free reign of this body.

I gave him more than Lee ever did.

I am Pendragon.

As this silly night passed midnight, I found myself being carried along in the ripened and burgeoning arms of Lilly Jade, hearing the bell I’d given her that had been meant as a sort of elastic necklace but had instead been wrapped about her leg. It jingled far more there than it’d ever might about her neck. But finding myself in the arms of a powerful female like this, I believe I was perhaps the only one who ever got this close to her... got into this rather precarious position.

I’ll admit... I like breasts... the bigger the better... well maybe not so big that she couldn’t move... that was just ridiculous, but Lilly had been blessed in her release of her human condition to be given a pair of beach ball-sized mammaries that were full and rounded but were just as soft as the rest of her. Like a pair of great big rounded memory foam pillows. Being that I was often carried like a stuffed animal by her since being wounded, like the present moment, I got to feel those orbs against the back of my head and ears and antennae.

A fairy dragon’s ears and antennae are incredibly sensitive by the way...

I was actually purring, a cackling-purr that sounded like an idling moped engine, complete with the occasional popping of a back fire, my lower body dangling beneath me against her belly while I hung off her thickly muscular arms. It was hard to determine her true strength and power, especially with a person who intrinsically feared the word ‘power’ and all of its implications. To her they were called ‘skills’ and ‘abilities’ and nothing more. She was able to do these things, and to the extent of which we knew not.

“Pen-Pen... you’ve been really troubled lately.” Lilly mentioned to me then and I opened my eyes slowly, the film of the third eyelid sliding off my eyes at the same time.

I felt her embrace me a little more firmly. Lilly was perhaps the most talented empath I’d ever met. She fed off of and generated nothing but good feelings. They radiated off her and filled my entire shrine with her affection at times. It was the harsh emotions like hatred and anger that she shrank from, even froze up from. Lilly never missed so much as a nuance of worry, and since I feared it might even psychologically hamper her, whenever she felt it she did everything in her power – er, ‘ability’ – to rectify that issue to re-establish the peace.

I sighed softly and laid my head on her arms.

“I’m waiting for the feather to break the camel’s back, Lilly.” I said and she nodded.

She was innocent... but nowhere near stupid. Her innocence made her ignorant of certain things that I was slowly informing her of. Her most recent interests in sexual interactions, for instance. She was long past the ‘Boys have a penis and girls have a vagina’ aspect of life, and she was aware that only females grew breasts... what she wasn’t aware of was that females of her breed were supposed to be blessed with twelve mammaries, like Susan was. For whatever reason in her prudish and humble ways, Lilly only displayed two. I wasn’t bold enough to go feeling through her belly and under boob fur for the extra ones... but I wouldn’t doubt it if she only had the two.

But I digress... the whole reason of stating all this is that I was certain that she understood what the feather breaking the camel’s back meant.

“Oh Pen-Pen...” she soothed and scratched my head with her scalpel-like claws that she nevertheless was so gentle with. Her claws were like a newborn’s... crystalline white and sharp from disuse. This was a sure sign as to how non-violent she was. The more a Lycan used their claws, the blacker they became. “...I wish I could take some of this weight off you.” And she kissed my wittle – I mean little – head. “All the stuff you do...”

“It’s more than that Lilly. I seem to be losing my touch. My visions have been failing me lately.”

Lilly gasped and then whimpered. “I d-didn’t do anything to cause that did I?”

“No... not at all,” I assured her. “The issues I’m having with the others didn’t include you in them at all, so you didn’t throw them off. I’m... just at my wits end. I’ve relied on my visions so much that I’ve nearly forgotten what it’s meant not to have them. My reliability has suffered somewhat because of it.”

“You’re really, really smart though Pen-Pen... I’m sure you’ll do ok.”

I paused and then twisted in her arms to look up over the swells of her breasts at her. For the moment, I appeared like Kill Roy looking over a wall up at her. “How do you know that Lilly?”

“I don’t know... it’s a mystery.” She said with glee. “Nee!” and she carried me to my room to retire.

*Not together mind you, she was too innocent for that. Though... those are a pair of arms I wouldn't mind sleeping within... It's time I... *ahem*... acted my age and not let myself be babied as much as I have been... no matter how good it felt.*

I am Remy.

Sen was a creature to admire... admire and study. She was an artistic subject worthy of nude paintings in the Louvre. Lying on her belly, sprawled out on my bed where she'd taken residency within now, how she did that I didn't know... it was so subtle but it was nevertheless done, she and I laid nude together now as close as any pair of lovers might be. Lying beside her, cupping a smooth, furry cheek of her bottom as her thick tail rested over the twin swells of that bottom, I felt that tight muscle that was covered in soft white fur and subtle pink skin. I loved that bottom... it was so smooth and silken in the fur... everything that a rat was, she wasn't... which is what drew me to her all the more.

I wanted nothing to do with a female rat... but she was more of a mouse than a rat.

She sighed as she laid there near sleep, and looking down at her, my hand pausing in a stroke to rest there, I looked intently on the back of her head. And then she turned to her side, two breasts on the side of her bodice lifting from the bedding, the other pair remaining partly pressed between her and the sheets.

"You've been so quiet lately." She mentioned.

A woman communicates more often than a man. Of course she'd notice if the little I did speak suddenly became littler.

"I was contemplating a puzzle..." I mentioned. "The answer is probably obvious, but for the life of me I can't figure it out."

"A puzzle? What sort of a puzzle?" she asked sweetly and now rolled onto her back, displaying her body invitingly, displayed everything about it unabashedly.

It was a distraction all right, especially when she made no attempt to hide her sex from me, and when I palmed her thigh, felt it upward, she lifted the other leg and let it arch away from the other, just so that I could touch her tight labia. That was a sign as to exactly how comfortable she was with me, that she'd show me the pert, downward sloping cleft of her vulva and the pink folds between the two lips. A woman had several degrees of trust.

Some were absolutely open about showing off their butt... that was easy. A nice placed thong, or hot pants or daisy dukes... just to show off those gluts. The next stage which required a great deal of trust was her chest. For her to show you her chest meant that she wanted you to look upon her sexually. To allow you to touch them was yet another stage of trust, and like with her breasts, letting you touch her most sacred point on her body was an even greater level of trust. The final thing to show was her sex, to stand there and allow you to evaluate her with no clothes on or make up, to let you judge her sexually as a woman... that was an incredible level of trust that she gave to her man. The ultimate sign of trust... was letting you enter her.

We'd already gone past that last point, so as I reached forward and soothed her labial muscles, tracing the lines of it with my finger tips, sliding a finger along the crease between them again I stopped and palmed her pelvis before

moving nearer to her to look into her eyes, coming to lay against her side as my hand passed to her sternum and then cupping her breast, and I took infinite pleasure in feeling these swollen mammaries of hers. Her eyes were a distraction as well, but I didn't want to be thinking with my other head when I delved into this conundrum.

"I can't figure out what I've done to earn your affections." I managed and she frowned subtly. Seeing her frown was really a pang in my chest. She never frowned... her face was dimpled from smiling all the time, and rounded along the cheek bones for the same reason. "I've... never been the sort to ever earn something so..." and I gestured at her. "...perfect." I looked down at her bodice and looking upon her bodice, I looked upon my hand cupping her tit and I caressed it with my thumb. "What sort of karma is there that I would deserve... this. I keep expecting for something or other to go horribly, horribly wrong. I'd like to know your mind, Sen. I... want to figure out why you would ever want... this." And I gestured to myself before I deflated backward.

She rolled again and rubbed her lower leg against my leg and my... leg.

"Maybe you're just my type." She mentioned sweetly, and then moved again to lie on top of me, my groin becoming cupped by the bowl of her thighs and pelvis while her breasts cleaved to the sides of my chest before she embraced me. But then laying against my chest, her arms holding my sides, this time she became quiet, and I was sure she was holding something back in the way she tensed. "But what if there was more between us?"

"Is there more between us?" I asked at last, holding her back, and then she slowly rose and repositioned herself till her mammaries pressed beneath my chin and her face was directly above mine. Amidst this movement, my hands fell down onto her bottom as she arched herself above me.

"What if I said yes?"

There was nervousness in her voice. She was worried. The only reason that she'd be worried is if I wouldn't like what she told me.

"Then I'd ask what." I told her, cupping that fine ass of hers.

"I..." she began and her voice cracked. "I'm..." and her voice wavered before she hung her head and exhaled a sigh.

She chickened out. "That's ok." I told her and embraced her. "Let me know when you're ready."

"Should I wait too long then it'll be too late."

"Too late?"

She gripped my chest fur with her fingers and then kissed my chest.

"I wait too long... then I won't be able to tell you... you'll just know."

Chapter 6: Preparation

A month had passed since Sue, Remy and I had escaped from Lea Monde, and markedly I'd been in the most prolonged and drawn out heat of my life. Every year it got worse, and now getting to sleep has been difficult, I would just toss and turn from the night agony of what's happening in my chest and loins, and I took to sleeping naked now on a collection of towels because when I finally did get to sleep it was to have torrid dreams of

Anhogamon that repeatedly got me waking up in a veritable pool of sweat, nectar and milk from my body while I had a mouthful of pillow in my mouth and knots of blanket in my hands.

Heats suck...

I was so sexually potent at the moment that I had a cadre of young men of a multitude of were-species as well as humans – even Ivan – trying to trip over my every whim in order to please me... till they got a raised eyebrow from Anho one day. Usually... I would've been insulted to have some male try to stake a claim on me, that I belonged to him and all other males better watch out lest they anger him... in times past I'd put full grown polar bears in their place for mistaking that they could claim me simply because they were male and I was a female. I liked proving that women were anything but weak simply because of their gender.

But since they all heard of Anho decimating Lee with nothing more than a switch of bamboo, Anho's reputation had grown so phenomenally in the shrine, that even Pen's battle hardened shrine guardian, the Tengu known as Falcor, stepped out of Anho's way and bowed first whenever Anho passed. For those of you unfamiliar with Japanese custom, that was an incredible honorary act... to both move out of the way *and* to bow first for one like Falcor to do... that alone made people fear and respect the skill of my... sweet... perfect... Anhogamon.

The fairy dragons gave him a wide berth too, hiding in, around or behind things and people whenever he passed... which was good really.

But what I did find very pleasing, was that despite that my perfect moment were destroyed, perhaps somewhere in his hardened warrior mind, Anho had an idea that my perfect moment was destroyed... so he often filled my days as of late with numerous other perfect moments... many of which didn't even have him immediately before me.

A white lotus on my plate at meals, baths at the bath house that were devoid of other people, a tray of waiting tea for me at night. There were no notes, there were no claims from him to try to place himself higher in anyone other's mind... they were thoughtful moments here and there that I knew were from him. Pen didn't do these things for me as of yet... these were romantic attempts from someone who'd never tried to court a woman before. They were quiet, they were poised... but they were from the heart.

At noon, every day since the bath, he invited me to a sitting area, not his room or mine, some place in the back of the shrine where it was quiet where we could have tea together. When I was with him my loins didn't bother me so much, and every day since the bath incident, our chairs grew closer... and closer... and *closer*... till he dared kiss me again.

It was a romantic measure, and it got me pressing my thighs together as he caressed my face and cheek and I felt the tickling sensation of his goatee on my mouth as we did this in human form. By the third day though... he dared alight a hand upon my tit, and I immediately gripped it and held it there, inviting him to feel more. By the end of that kiss, his hand was soothing the underside of my breast from beneath the layer of my robes, his bare hand on my bare skin.

But every day... my eyes were inviting him further to me... and every day there was that one step closer.

The fairy dragons had destroyed the bridge that had been made between Anho and me and then burned it to the ground before it sank into the swamp, but tenuously... little by little, we were rebuilding that bridge between us.

Ah me... maybe heats aren't so bad...

Remy was still sticking around though... he'd found a sweet little thing named Sen to occupy his attentions, and she was so privy to him it was as if they were already married. He was still silent and brooding, and strangely growing even more so... except when he was with her, but nevertheless he was still as always sneaking around in the most extreme places... it appeared as if he were shaking the borders... jiggling handles, making sure fences were secured and that sort of thing. I knew he was a thief, but I'd never known a thief to do that sort of thing from the inside.

But then there was that Sen woman... she had no surname, no family, and to hear Pen recall it, she was left on his doorstep one night. Poor little thing. She seemed to be affectionate to Remy though, and it was only with her that he seemed to brighten up and smile anymore.

They held hands a lot.

Sue was now a month along in her pregnancy. Still not showing said pregnancy... well not showing in the middle, but she was showing in the chest. She'd developed four primaries – one secondary pair having swollen to the same size as the first pair – in her hybrid forms, with the sets below them all bulbous and rounded. She produced a *lot* of milk... which was strange. Even heavy milk producers like the herd lycanthropes like the Yak and Buffalo didn't produce as much milk as that. She was a freak in that regards, not that Madoushi was complaining. They came down stairs one day and he had a milk moustache before Sue noticed it and promptly cleaned his upper lip hastily.

For his sake, it was a good thing that Anhogamon happened along when he did, else wise Madoushi would've died because of Lee. But because of Lee, Mad seems to have obtained... something. '*A newfound perception*,' Sue called it. She explained it that he'd become aware of more, and because he was aware of more his ability to affect that with his powers had expanded. His powers were alien when one looked upon them with the mind of someone steeped in '*traditional*' magic like me and most everyone else here. Dreamtime was a weird and strange way of controlling the universe, and somehow, his near-death experience had expanded that control.

As for Anhogamon and me...

Le sigh... aside from our growing relationship and tea dates, I've been blushing from sensuality for so long I feared that it'd burn itself into my skin. Holding hands with him, sharing kisses with him, embracing each other from time to time even, but whenever we came close to that tenuous moment of scattered clothing and penetration... it never came. Something *always* happened. Sometimes it was him, sometimes it was me, sometimes it was an interruption of someone entering the room... but... regardless... my vulva still remained un-pierced.

I couldn't believe it... I was even trying now. This was the first time in my life I had a guy that I wanted in me while I was in a heat! He must know I was in heat... he had to know, there was no mistaking it on me no matter how dense a person was... and still... he was willing to grow nearer, willing to go that far if not for all the damned distractions. He obviously knew what a heat was and what would happen if he penetrated and seeded me, my second mother was proof of that, so he was ready, willing and able to start a family with me right away too.

But we just... couldn't... do it! It was to the point where whatever panties I wore were nigh soggy by the end of the day. I'd not wear panties, but then that would mean everything else would be wet instead.

But this day... this day I was hopeful. This day I strode through the halls in the early morning before breakfast, my robes stirring about me while I strode purposefully toward my destination. I wanted Anhogamon to look upon me, I wanted him to take pleasure in me, so I wore clothing that revealed that which I knew he liked to see. He liked thighs, he liked calves, so I left them uncovered, with a Chun-Li sort of robe on that covered bottom and crotch but left those thick, thick thighs open for him to see. The sleeves of that robe covered my arms, whereas I hadn't buttoned the bodice of the robe up all the way and pushed the chest wrap down and parted the front of the robe to

reveal more cleavage, not enough to show off teat or areola... I had some qualms and I still had to walk out into the open. I was also wearing a subtle perfume of flowers and trees to actually enhance my heat's effects on drawing a male, while White Oak had stylized my hair over one side of my head so that the long twisting braid could hang over my bodice.

Anho had invited me to his rooms, today. He said it was very, very important. I hoped... I wished... I crossed fingers and my heart as I came before his door, my loins swelling my teats stirring as they creamed a little, and taking a deep breath I knocked.

There was no sound on the other side before the door swung open, revealing Anhogamon in the entryway.

"Fellania." He greeted. His face was passive, but there was a note, just a note, of excitement in his voice in seeing me. I smiled at him and felt my nipples harden as I folded my hands together and bowed subtly... this of course caused my breasts to hang and wobble as I did, and allowed him to see down my cleavage.

"Anho." I replied and rose.

We'd become... familiar... at least, so that we could use each other's name in the familiar.

"Please come in." he mentioned and stepped out of the way, offering me his hand.

Such a gentleman... helping a lady even across a quarter inch high threshold.

I squeezed his hand, my breathing quickening as I followed him into his rooms and he closed the door to the humble set of rooms he maintained. I'd come to learn that the innards of Pen's shrine was a lot bigger than the outside suggested it to be. I was about to begin in luring Anho to me when I spied Pendragon himself sitting on a stool nearby.

"Pen..." I managed in surprise as Anho released my hand and I looked to him as he left me to go join Pendragon. "I'm... surprised. I didn't expect you here."

There was a subtle little smile on Pen's face as his eyes flickered from head to toe on me before that smile broadened.

"No... I don't suppose you were." He said in a suggestive tone and I made a point to fold the outer robe I was wearing about my bodice and hold it shut by folding my arms over my bust. Great... he'd figured out what I'd been attempting with Anho in coming here today. Well so what? He knew there was a connection between us. I was just trying to speed it along!

"Anhogamon asked me here." Pen mentioned. "He has something very important to discuss with you."

"I-Important? With me?" I blinked and grew excited.

Here it comes, he's going to ask me to marry him! I squealed inwardly with the same excitement I now felt. I was so excited I was trembling in a desire to squeal with glee! Super-bouncy teenager-mode... GO!

"Extremely important." Anho mentioned, tucking his thumbs into the sash that held his swords. "Given the circumstances, I thought of no one else that I could... trust."

“Oh yes... yes I do!” I said excitedly. I was so excited at the moment that, as what happens sometimes when I’m excited... I didn’t think through what I was answering to.

“Then you agree to come along then?” Anho blinked.

“Yes! Most emphatically I do and... wait what? Come along?” now it was my time to blink.

It was Pen chuckling softly that drew our attentions. “Apologies... Anho, Fellania had been thinking you were about to ask her something else.”

I started to blush out of embarrassment.

“Something else? What else could she... be...” and Anho turned to me, saw me blushing.

“Fellania, to explain...” Pen covered. “Anhogamon confronted me with an issue that he needs your help in rectifying.”

“My help?” I sat down. “What does he need my help with?”

Pen lifted his staff and made a horizontal circling gesture with it, and immediately a medium sized box drifted gently down out of a portal he made from the motion and set itself on the ground before him. Dispelling the portal, Pen then knocked on the top of the chest with his staff and it opened.

Anhogamon then moved to it, and from one of the internal compartments, he removed a jar that had been sealed with a ribbon and a grand clay seal on its top.

“Um... what is it?” I asked as Anhogamon held it in his hands.

“Hate.” Anhogamon replied.

“I’m sorry?” I blinked.

“There is a box, Fellania. This box was designed by the Fae, and collectively, it is the culmination of their incredible power. The Box was constructed using the greatest of techniques with a rare, very rare astronomical event that occurs only once every five thousand, one hundred and twenty five years.”

I stared at Pen while Anho held the jar. “Why do I know that number?” I asked quietly.

“The next date that that schedule comes about is December twenty-first, twenty-twelve.” Pen answered and I stared at him, feeling my lips part.

“Doomsday...”

“According to the Aztec calendar, yes. The last time this happened there was a planetary conjunction that spawned most of the words mythology and belief in gods before monotheism took root. These conjunctions are *always* earth-impacting... and each one is worse than the one before as the planets spread further and further apart.”

“And this box?” I ventured cautiously.

“Was once owned, or rather looked after, by the woman Pandora.” Pen replied quietly and I exhaled a long breath of air. “The Fae, as an element to compound their own personal powers, did several things that are... *questionable*... to increase their presence and dominion over the world. One thing was to take the spirit of every sickness, every evil that they knew of and contain it within the box, thusly removing them from weakness, and with no weakness, they only grew that much more powerful... like gods.

“But those gods... had a rather cruel sense of humor.”

“How so?” I asked.

It was Anhogamon who answered. “After my time, two hundred thousand years after I was frozen in ice, Pendragon informed me that they tricked a pure, young woman, the only creature that could open the box, to care for the box... telling her that no matter what she did...”

“Don’t look in the box.” I breathed and Anho nodded, holding the jar.

“Her curiosity got the better of her, and all of the weaknesses of the Fae instead infested humanity. Humanity’s exceptionally long lives that were then in the thousands of years...”

“...Think Methuselah.” Pen quickly added.

“...was reduced to less than a century.”

“The sicknesses culminated during the renaissance period when the average life span of a human being was less than forty years. We’ve spent ages trying to repair the *‘practical joke’* of the Fae.” Pen added. “It’s been a cold war between Fae and Dragon for ages because of it, and all they did was laugh and roll over and go to sleep for awhile.”

“A practical Joke?!” I gasped. “They think that subjecting our race to disease and weakness is a practical joke?! They’re... monsters!”

“The Fae have reaped what they’ve sewn, Fellania. God Himself has cursed them, and adding insult to injury to paying them back for their joke, God turned the Fae’s weaknesses into humanity’s strengths. To coin a phrase, that which doesn’t kill you makes you stronger.

“Humans have become naturally resistant to illness and diseases, and your science kills new sicknesses as they arrive, making you more or less immune to the diseases. Other weaknesses, other evils that were contained within the box, humanity have done a very good job in defeating those evils one by one. There are, however, some evils... that still need to be contained.”

I looked to the Jar in Anhogamon’s hands. “Hatred?” I ventured and both of them nodded. “But... what can I do with... hatred?”

“The world is on fire, Fellania. Scripture in the Book of Revelations in regards to the End of Days speaks of *‘Wars and rumors of wars’*. Ask yourself. How many wars has America alone been involved in over the past century?” I fell silent. “Indeed. They average a war once every ten years or so. Hatred abounds, and so long as hatred remains in the world... it cannot be quelled.”

“The Empress was a Spirit Folk... a panda.” Anho stated and approached me, and before I knew it, he placed the jar into my hands. “She was very old but nonetheless was remarkably beautiful as a young maiden might be, while at

the same time was a devout priestess of phenomenal wisdom and prowess.” I held the jar, and it felt like it was on the verge of burning me. “She sent her own handmaiden and her personal guardian, a dragon known as Abraxis, to fetch me quietly. He stood by looking for enemies while on her knees her handmaiden pleaded for me to come with them. They took me to her and she asked of me to do a quest. She asked... she didn’t command. She let me decide for myself if I was to take on the quest or not. In the end... I acquiesced.

“And then she handed me that jar.

“I was to carry it with me, sealed with her holy powers, and as I went from place to place slaying evils in the world, the jar took up those evils, their hate, the perpetual anger of my time, and stored it in the jar. That is a virulent coiled snake, Fellania and I... gave up... *everything*... for it.”

“Everything...” I mentioned, and blinked away tears.

My first mother, or what of her there was in me, felt the dawning understanding of why... why did he leave? Why did he forsake family for duty? What cost was necessary to leave his newborn child and newly acquired mate behind?

I stood and not being able to stop myself, I pulled Anhogamon to my bosom and kissed his forehead. “I forgive you.” I told him and kissed him again before I regained control of myself and stepped back hastily. “Um... Sorry. I don’t know where that came from.”

“It came from your first mother, Fellania.” Pen said as Anhogamon looked from me to him in confusion. “I watched her live, make friends, raise her daughter, see her daughter off into the world while she remained behind, waiting... for millennia... for Anhogamon to return to her.” Pen’s face became somber as he looked at nothing in particular. “If one was to describe what happens to a person suffering heartache from waiting for a loved one to return... I would easily describe what your first mother was like right before she died.

“She never forgot you Anhogamon. Even to the last moment that she died, she had hope of your return.”

I was grateful for the meaningful glance Pen gave Anho... it was the first thing that I’d seen that set a discernable break in Anho’s bulwark of emotionlessness. Anho looked down and gripped one fist in the other hand.

“I hate that jar.” Anho mentioned with an almost snarl. He never snarled... it showed how much he hated it. “I want to be rid of it. I want it gone and this quest over. I want all those years back, I want my wife and child back! I was locked in ice for countless eras, everything that I knew has died and turned to dust because of that damned jar!”

I gaped at the sound of him raising his voice, and then my lips pressed tightly and I held the jar tightly. “Not everything.” I mentioned and he looked at me. “You haven’t lost everything... some things... followed you.”

I have to admit, seeing his lips turn ever so slightly toward a smile made me swoon.

“What am I... chopped liver?” Pen smirked, and we both managed to chuckle. True... he was an old little bugger, but he was something from Anho’s time. “Regardless, Fellania... Anho has a proposition for you... just... not the one you thought it’d be.”

A questioning glance to me came from Anho, but he continued on before it did more than flicker onto his features.

“I want you with me when I dispose of this jar. I... need you to be there for more reasons than just the one.”

“For more than just... what?” I blinked.

“This jar is impervious to damage so long as the seal is in place.” Anho said and took the jar from my hands before holding it aloft and dropping it right to the ground in a loud clunk to show off its imperviousness. “The power in it preserves it while at the same time sealing itself inside it.” He stooped and picked up the jar and lifted it before placing it into its place in his chest. “The seal, however, can be broken only by a pure woman. I need a pure woman to open the jar to pour its contents into the box.”

“A pure woman? Me? Well, I don’t know about pure but...”

“Fellania.” Pen interrupted. “You are a druidess, the direct descendant of the first druidess in all of humanity. Your goal in life is purity and cleansing the world, and you selflessly place yourself before all the dark things in the world to protect those that need protecting. There is no greater thing than sacrifice. But... a pure woman alludes to one other thing, Fellania... and that... is the fact that you’re still a virgin.”

I thought of what he was implying. He must know that I wanted sex from Anho more than anything at the moment. For me to do this, to fulfill this thing for Anho, I needed to stay a virgin? “Ah darn it.” I whispered. “How long till we do this then?”

“Preparations are underway... a few days at the most.” Anho answered and I exhaled a sigh of relief and then nodded before stepping forward and gripped his hands in mine... he didn’t shy from the connection.

“Why else are you asking me to do this?” I asked him.

Anhogamon looked me right in the eye... and told me why.

“I lost everything in the past. Whatever god or gods exist, whether it’s fate... I’ve been given a second chance that I refuse to squander this time. I lost my family once because of this quest... I... don’t want to lose it... again.”

And then he kissed me.

I am Sue.

Waiting on people in a shrine store was calming in light of my recent experiences in Deadwood and Lea Monde, the Vatican and Chernobyl. Corrupt ancient earth elementals, high security vaults, ancient evils... yeah... I could use a little vacation. Maternity leave was just that sort of vacation.

The changes that were happening to my body might’ve made my nipples perpetually semi-erect and gave me a milk-laden chest that needed to be siphoned at least once a day, sometimes twice, but the sensation of my little love growing inside me sent a calming sensation through me that was rather euphoric. It sent a sensation through me that had me smiling for the longest time in my life ever.

With the fairy dragons working on the grounds, flitting about and fixing this or repairing that, and the occasional irate customer getting himself violated by Bob and his brood, I was also granted a measure of humor from time to time as well. And so now that it was four weeks since escaping from the biggest danger ever, I was settling into this monastic lifestyle quite well.

“Psst...”

I blinked and looked around, but seeing nothing I went back to straightening the little meditative knick knacks for sale.

“Psst... Susan!” *Now I was sure I’d heard something, but looking around again I saw no one. “Down here, moya tovarichka.” The voice and accent became familiar all of a sudden, and the unmistakable guttural Russian words drew my attention downward toward Ivan, missing his boots at the moment and walking on all fours with his tail raised straight upward.*

“Ivan... you need to be careful... there’s people in the store.” *I whispered and stooped, picking him up and cradling his tail and bottom.*

“Mew is missing, Susan.” *Ivan replied. “I’ve been looking for her but she’s not in her bedding or your rooms. She doesn’t go anywhere else.”*

“Missing?” *I blinked. “Oh no. That can only mean...” I muttered something to one of the other shrine girls in Japanese, the best I could manage was ‘I need to go’ before I hurried into the shrine with Ivan.*

Cats are highly private creatures. Old tales of cats tell of them being secret keepers, being mysterious things because of it. That’s why pet cats need to have a private, sandy place to go to the bathroom, hence covered kitty litter boxes, and that’s why when a pregnant female cat nearing the end of her pregnancy goes missing, it means that she’s gone into labor and is looking for a quiet, solitary place to have her kittens.

“She wouldn’t have gone far, Ivan. She may be in our rooms still. Do you know any nooks and crannies the two of you might visit?”

“Checked them already. She’s in none of them.” *Ivan replied; he was wringing his paws.*

“Well, we just can’t leave her alone to...” *and I stopped, seeing Pen up the hall as he walked his tall staff with each step to whatever destination he was going.*

“Pen!” *I said and hurried to him and he turned. “Pen can you help us? Mew is missing.”*

“Mew you say?” *he asked and lifted his head just a smidge, his antennae lifting. “Hm. Follow me.”*

And he turned, using that hobbling walk of his as he led the way this way and that way, before coming to a cubby hole under a set of stairs, and though the door was the right size for him, I had to set Ivan down and stoop over deeply, becoming well aware all of a sudden that a firm, overly-large pair of tits wasn’t necessarily preferential all the time when I had to wedge my way through the little door first broad shoulders and then one tit at a time only to be caught by my wide hips. Twisting those I crawled into the hole, feeling a bit like Alice in Wonderland delving down the rabbit hole as we dipped low under the shrine and then entered into a shaped stone cavern beneath it.

The room we entered into eventually, though, was huge! It was rounded and filled with baubles and soft things from fur rugs and blankets and coats, to those plastic frilly things given out at parties, Mardi Gras and Hawaii when you step off the plane. There were lots of sparkly things made of plastic and metal, of crystals and even sparkling threads, even CD’s that were hung from fishing line and screen to give the room a glittering disco-ball look to it. There were old fishermen’s orbs, large blown glass balls in a webbing of rope that Japanese fishermen used to tie

their nets to, arrayed about the room. To a collector, these orbs were hundreds if not thousands of dollars each, and could be found along the shores of Japan, China, Russia and even Alaska... with the current sometimes carrying the orbs as far as LA.

A collection of blankets that looked like they'd been meticulously repaired, sheets that had been darned and old stuffed animals that had been re-sewn and cleaned beautifully to nigh original condition, despite that they looked like they'd been held in the arms of children for years and then found in a dump or a dumpster. The stuffed animals had new buttons and new stitches but old fabric... they looked well-worn. Twinkling things were arrayed around the room along with dressers and wardrobes that looked repainted and mended with patches, an old vanity covered with feminine things like ornate perfume bottles and music boxes and cases with a collection of ribbons of all sorts being foremost of the objects on that vanity with its matching velvet cushion.

Pictures and photographs galore served as wall paper for the room, intermixed with drawings and even schematics that looked really, really advanced. The books here ranged from children's books to technical manuals.

On the one side it looked like a child's room really. It was clean in its disarray, and well lit with magical lights inside the glass orbs or spell spheres that danced about like lazy fireflies atop the ceiling, their light reflecting off nearly every surface to give the room that glittery appearance.

It felt... comfortable in its orderly disorder.

But on the other side... there were pieced together pieces of electronics here, everyday devices like car stereos and bits and pieces of various discarded electronics that looked like they were rescued from a surplus store or maybe even a landfill. Impressively though, there was a great big holographic screen here that was beaming a multitude of multi colored lights here to display a true three-dimensional image of a blue spikey-haired toon character that looked like sonic the hedge hog... only he was a lot more muscular with other buff creatures on the display.

A flashing pause button showed that this was a video game of some sort, but being that I'd never heard of a gaming console that could be attached and project images to a screen like that, I could only assume that this was a custom video game... especially when one looked at the controller that was placed off to one side that looked like it was taken from a flight simulator or perhaps a MechWarrior game... only with more buttons.

A multitude of other flat screens about this one screen showed compiling programming code, image renders, several news screens, a cartoon show and schemata for some new design of electronics.

The sound system for all this was a collection of home and car stereo components mixed together with fiber optic and speaker cable, and dozens of speakers from tweeters to base speakers and subwoofers were projecting what I'd call a concert-quality brand of Mozart. Or was it Vivaldi?

A rat – and by rat, I mean a jumbo albino sewer rat – In a gynomous mouse habitat with plastic tubes made out of PVC piping and plastic bottles was off in a nook.

And the clutter was everywhere, with boxes and plastic milk cartons stacked on top of more boxes, a couple of mini refrigerators with blankets that once belonged to children and looked like they'd been thrown away had their good parts cut out and sewn into big fluffy-soft quilt comforters and cleaned immaculately of whatever trash infested den they might've been in.

The heart of a child but the mind of a genius and the playfulness of a cat were in this room, and I took one look at it all and said: "Someone lives down here?" I blanched as I stood up, was surprised that I could stand up.

I could even assume my full hybrid form in here easily and not even have to stoop. Off to one side there were shaped archways that led into raised and lowered portions of these chambers, one leading off to a bath and another leading to a kitchen. Those too were clean, just and ordered disorganization... like some sort of complex and rather chaotic pattern that I just didn't have the mind power to see.

"Indeed someone does. This is Lilly's room..." Pen voiced and a blanket lifted suddenly that I had thought was just a great big lump, and Lilly, the massive fem that she was and dressed in a pair of PJ's that were really little more than shorts and a belly shirt on her, a bell tinkling from around her thigh, she mewed happily.

"Penny!" she said with glee, the tip of her fluffy tail escaping from beneath another distant fold of the heavy blankets and furs and began wagging.

"Penny?" I smirked.

"She means me..." Pen smirked and then approached and palmed her cheek and she turned her head to rub her feline cheek and his hand came back with a slick of her pheromones on his hand, and looking down into a cubby hole formed by Lilly's body...

"Mew!" Ivan shouted and dropped from my arms, hopping over the rolls of blankets to the sexy kitty fem as she laid on her side. She was breathing very quickly.

"Hm?" she purred and lifted her head briefly as she panted.

"Yup... she's definitely in labor." Pen mentioned, and Lilly gave off a gleeful mew.

"Something magical is happening." She beamed and Pen nodded.

"Watch carefully Lilly... someday you may do the same thing."

"Really?!" she blinked and I turned to look at her in surprise. "I can do something so wonderful like this?!" Pen must've caught my thought cause he turned to me and smirked. How could a woman like that not know that she held the power to create life?

"All right Ivan. Let's go." Pen said.

"What?! No!" Ivan balked. "I will remain right... here!" and he sat down roughly, folded his arms and pouted. "I will be here when my kittens are born! Un-unless Mew wants me to leave..." he added and looked to Mew. Mew merely murred.

"Birth is the realm of females, Ivan. If you stay then I'd urge you not to get in the way." And then he stepped to me and gripped my fingers while Mew panted and tensed, definitely trying to push now. "I must attend to matters of the shrine, Susan. Keep me posted. It's been a long time since my shrine saw a birth." I nodded before he turned to Lilly. "Lilly... I want you to stay in your room today." Pen mentioned. "There are some people outside the shrine who've been looking for you."

"Looking?" she asked, her ears flicking backward against her head. "The Bad men?" she asked and Pen nodded before she hunched her shoulders. "Ok, I will."

Pen nodded. "I'll check in on you all later... but I don't suspect it will be any time soon." He announced and donned the hood of his robe before leaving through the little rabbit, or should I say cat, hole.

Striding over to the mound of blankets and furs where Mew labored, I lowered a hand gently to her side and she stirred immediately, smelled my hand and then laid down again. If I were any other person I was sure she'd bite me. But kneeling there with Lilly and Ivan, we watched my magical kitty give birth to her kittens, all while in the back of my mind I considered that in eight months... I'd be doing the same for my daughter.

I am Remy.

Sen was such a beauty... and my affections for her were only growing stronger. Her movements were like a dance as she trained. Graceful and precise, it was a martial form very similar to Capoeira, but unlike a Afro-Brazilian form, hers were slower, more precise, and the dance form was less acrobatic. In her case... it was deceptive, and in slow movements it could be used to make a fan dance in her hands as she turned and poised and pirouetted, like a geisha doing Noh, but with quick movements she could easily disembowel and gut you, penetrate you with a knife and twist it before pulling it out.

As she was turning I slid in silently behind her, I wearing black, she wearing purest white silks, and as she turned in her slow movements, I accomplished a slow strike, testing its fluidity. Her wrist found my hand and pushed it out of the way as she smiled at me.

Just like that, our movements flowed together, slow at first, but then the dance got faster and faster, our hands, feet and legs moving to gain superiority over the other. Her defenses turned into strikes that I had to block, and before I knew it we were sparring.

Rats were spectacular things when they were moving. Motions were more like a scamper than they were leaps and bounds. We weren't great leapers, we weren't great runners, our bodies weren't built to be predators; we were built to be scavengers. But we had to compete and contend with predators, and so our scampering was altered with various techniques to not only allow us to compete with but supersede the actions of a predator via using our small sizes to be quicker and more dexterous than they were. Oh cats and snakes still were our predators and competitors... they being the only ones remaining who could give us a run for our money since they have been and always shall be our predators... but even they've learned never to cross a rat.

If they didn't fear our nimble quickness and even if they didn't fear our bite... then they definitely feared our numbers.

But then very soon, Sen and I were slapping and chopping, blocking and kicking each other in various ways... and call me crazy... but this was really turning me on!

Right until she twisted, she turned, slid into a shaft of sunlight and then disappeared.

"What?" I gaped and turned about, looking for a teleportation effect. Ninja Chi magic or something similar came to mind, and I sought to catch her off guard as I looked around for her, right before I was grappled from behind and a long knife, pulled from a hair rod found its way along my tracheal artery. "Sen? How did..."

And then there was laughter, right before I was tripped up and thrown over her hip onto the ground, right before I felt her knife at my throat again, she straddling my lap while she held me, and the crotch of her trousers directly before my face.

“So. Not so helpless am I?” she mused amidst the laughter.

“Apparently not. But how...”

“What is the most impressive form of stealth you know about, Remy?” Pen’s voice came to us as he strode near, and looking to him I blinked up at him.

“Stealth? That was stealth?” I asked and he nodded before Sen helped me up.

“A rat has the ability to become completely invisible in the dark. It isn’t magic, not completely, it’s not detected via magic senses, but rather it’s an element of will. But just like there is an ability to Hide in Shadows as it were... there is also the ability to Hide in Light.”

“That’s impossible!” I blinked, and in answer Pen gestured to Sen.

“Do you doubt your own eyes?” he asked and I looked from her where she stood with one hand on hip, smiling at me to him again. She was smiling at me as she stepped backward, her hips rocking like a metronome, but when she slid into the shaft of light she disappeared as if she were never there. “Would you like to learn?”

“Yes.” I answered and Pen nodded.

“Sen... you are now a master... Remy is now your student.” Pen said simply.

Sen leapt out of the light and both she and I both said: “Really?”

“Yes really. I’d teach you myself but sadly I have duties to attend to. That... and I feel you’d much better prefer Sen’s tutelage to mine.” This Pen said as he turned and gestured over his shoulder with one hand in farewell.

“Much appreciated...” I said dumbly, and Sen stepped in beside me and wrapped her arms about one of mine to embrace me.

“Don’t worry... I’ll be gentle.” She mused, and I felt her bosoms cleave to the sides of my arm while her tail laced with mine.

“True... but if we might break first... you’re a very... energetic dancer.” I smirked and she sighed joyously and still hugging my arm she began leading me away.

“Certainly... but I get to choose where... because I’m the master and you’re the student and all.”

“You get to choose?” I mentioned and she beamed and nodded quickly.

So then it was soon after that we found ourselves in a secluded part of the shrine, coupling like lovers.

...

Like lovers. Who was I kidding? We were lovers...

“I do love you.” I told her as I was playing with her breasts with either hand and she took both of those hands in hers and pressed my fingers deeper into the spongy masses of her chest.

“You have no idea how glad I am to hear that.” She whispered, and with me penetrating her, she bent over and kissed me lightly before pressing her forehead against mine. “It lets me tell you something I’ve been keeping from you.”

“Keeping from me?” I repeated, feeling the hairs on my head and the back of my neck raise in anticipation as she rose again, my dick still tucked in her love pocket.

“I wouldn’t tie you down, beloved,” she smiled to me, and hearing those words said to me made my heart soften grandly. “But I’ve been keeping this from you in hopes... that you’d love me for me... and not for duty.”

“What?” I laughed.

In answer she lifted her chin and dragged my hands downward from her breasts to her belly where she held them there and gripped them tightly.

“Remy... I’m pregnant.”

My name is Pendragon, Grandmaster of the Dawn, Outer Circle Counselor to the Dragon High Council.

The Creator had tasked Dragonkind to protect the Earth. Like I may’ve mentioned before, we dragons were a little... perturbed... that after the Great Maker told us to protect, the Fae to guide and the Elves to tend to the Earth, that humans came along and He told them to simply ‘multiply and replenish the Earth’, meaning that the elder races were always meant to provide for the youngest.

When the dragons took affront to this and the Cromags – the Chromatic Dragons – led the charge on wiping humanity out, I was one of the ones who sat in the back and watched. Fairy Dragons aren’t known – usually – for being combative. I’ll admit that on occasion I have raised a battle standard; this was one instance that I decided not to take sides in the First Dragon War.

And so I watched something remarkable:

No matter how hard Dragonkind tried to extinguish the flame that was humanity... they just... couldn’t... do it. Mankind just... wouldn’t... die!

We... eldest and greatest of all the races of Earth... overcome by a tiny creature that was more often than not only a small percentage of our size. I watched humans create fortresses and bastions, watched them fight back with sticks and stones, and, to coin a phrase, something that even we dragons didn’t realize, but even a cow can be taken down by enough ants.

We almost wiped them out, we almost destroyed them, but out of sheer luck it seemed, though I know now that it must’ve been Divine providence, they persevered. Being social creatures, they socialized; they made friends, friends that helped them. They bonded very closely to the Panzer Tribe of our own race, a tribe that the Cromags were also

trying to eliminate at the same time, and the union of dragon and rider blossomed during those times. This was also the time that Dragon Slayers rose up, and we saw something even more spectacular:

A lone ant killed a cow.

And it kept happening, they began to push us back, first with one, then a couple, then a few... the few becoming many, the many grew to legions. Though all things are not impossible and merely improbable, there is nonetheless a point where one, especially me, had to recognize that Divine influence.

Especially when the new Arch Dragon Pseudodrake befriended humankind, made their best Dragon Slayer his rider. The improbability of all that skated very narrowly on what I considered the impossible. So when Pseudodrake approached the Eldest Wurm of the Panzers and got his aide in a coup to overthrow the rule of the Cromags, when Pseudodrake then approached me for aide, I knew fear for the first time in my life.

Not of Pseudodrake mind you... but rather of God. I recognized His hand in the proceedings, and so I feared the consequences if I didn't provide my aide and did absolutely everything our priests had commanded our race since day one. I felt blessed that I was being given a chance. I hadn't helped the dragons wipe out His favorite children, but then again I hadn't stopped them either.

It was in that moment that I accepted the Creator's design for my race. We were still great... but man had been chosen to rule the Earth... not us. It was then that I committed myself to teaching Mankind, and have done so for the past three hundred eons.

I've come to care for them, as if every last six-point-eight billion of them were all my family, either directly or indirectly, and so whenever one of my favorites is threatened... like any protector... I tend to get a bit... irritable toward those threatening individuals.

So here I was, near the top of my shrine, looking out through a window over the wall to my shrine at a threat.

This threat threatened Lilly Jade specifically.

Despite that this was Japanese sovereign soil; the United States Government had a certain degree of control here, retaining some of the control they'd acquired after assuming control of Japan after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki during the occupation after World War II. There was an alliance between Japan and the United States still that allowed American Government Agents to do certain actions on Japanese soil under the guise of 'National Security'.

In this case, I was looking at a CIA observation vehicle disguised as a Winnebago.

To the unknown observer, this vehicle was right at home. It was an RV and this was a place to visit in Japan if you were site seeing. To a trained observer like me, I held the knowledge that Japanese-designed Winnebagos were sleeker than the American used blocky Winnebago's. The number of license plates on the RV were likewise far too many for a vehicle of that type. The probability that some rich American would actually take their RV overseas with them, either via boat or plane would be a ridiculous cost. Those who could afford that sort of cost wouldn't be driving around in a Winnebago either. They'd get something ultra modern and extremely comfortable... they'd rent in other words, and there wouldn't be so many license plates on the vehicle. License plates, for example, that was valid in England, Europe, Russia and Egypt, or more specifically, London, Paris, Berlin, Moscow, and Cairo, the espionage capitols of the world.

Though eccentricities do exist that would allow this sort of thing to happen, of some random American to cart their RV all over the world, the probability of this actually being that sort of person dwindled as one looked at the remaining details.

For example... the Radar dishes that were pointing toward my shrine instead of south where standard commercial satellites were, the extemporaneous roof equipment that was highly unnecessary could only be observation equipment. Likewise, the pulled blackout curtains on all the windows and the shaded side windows with a front facing sun screen in place in the window of someone having used the vehicle, despite that there were no Americans in my shrine today, bespoke of one of two scenarios.

Either this was an Eccentric American millionaire with his beloved Winnebago who traveled a lot and had an issue with bright lights and liked bird watching and hiking in the woods instead of coming to a perfectly good and inviting site-seeing spot right across the street like my shrine, or this was a state-of-the-art government observation vehicle with geosynchronous upload capability to a government satellite positioned above the pacific border of the United States and could therefore observe Japanese communications via line-of-site observation.

The probabilities favored the later far more than the former...

“Bob...” I said aloud and waited a few second before uttering a sigh. “Bo~ob!” I shouted louder, and with a light crack Bob appeared with a great big bib around his neck that had a lobster tail printed on it.

“Damn it. You sit down for a meal and there’s a shout from the master. And if it’s not a meal then it’s a bath, and if it isn’t a bath then I’m fucking. What is it with you? Do you even check to see if I’m preoccupied?”

“You’re not being ungrateful, are you Bob?” I asked with a twitch of my antenna. “Under the conditions you came here in the first place, you don’t exactly reserve the privilege to be ungrateful... now do you?”

“Crap on a cracker. Ok what is it?” he said and bit into the lobster tail he had with him, shell and all.

“Do you see that Winnebago down there?” I asked him and pointed with the whole of my hand at it.

“You mean the wanna-bang-o?” he chuckled and I raised an eyebrow at him. “Yes. Yes I do.” And he bit on more of his lobster tail.

“Good. Now, mark this day, Bob... because I seriously doubt you’ll ever hear me doing this again any time soon.”

“What... lecture me? Let me see, when was the last time you did that?” and he pulled out a giant pocket watch that was bigger than him that chimed with the sound of Big Ben. “Look at that. An hour ago exactly. No one can say you aren’t punctual...”

“Bob...”

“I mean... I set my watch to it last time, and look it here,” he showed me the watch face that had a multitude of hands currently set into the form of a hand erecting its middle finger at me. “Right on time for an F... U...” he stowed the watch and bit into the lobster tail quite noisily this time, and kept his mouth open to make me watch him chew.

“Oh I see, and I was going to ask you a favor.” *I said and turned away from him.* “I guess I’ll just have to get someone else to go ape shit on them instead. I mean I may be a million and a half right now... but I may still have my tricks.”

“Tricks? What do you mean tricks?”

“Oh never mind. I was going to let you go... do all the chaos and mayhem you wanted to, to those people down there, but nope... you blew it. I’ll just have to do it myself. Maybe I should hire some gremlins...”

“Gremlins?! The poor-man’s fairy dragon?! Whoa! W-wait... you were going to let... moi... go nuts?”

“Yup... but too late now. You blew it and...”

“Hey! I can be trickier and cause more mayhem than you *and* a whole legion of Gremlins do all year before I even wake up in the morning!” *he shouted and flew up in front of me, poking me in the chest.* “I can be... wait... why are you asking this anyways? Do you find me... annoying or something?” *he eyed me.*

“In ways that only you can manage to be Bob.” *I smirked and pointed down at the Winnebago again.* “That and everyone in it... is your target. You may use your entire brood for the matter so long as it doesn’t interfere with the shrine, affects only that vehicle and the people who are in it and you can’t cause any permanent damage.”

“Just a stupid Winnebago?”

“I can get some gremlins to do it still.” *I announced.*

“Hey! I do have *some* pride. Gremlins have absolutely nothing on a Fairy Dragon’s ability to cause mayhem. Why I’ve got more chaos in my little pinkie than a whole nest of them do.” *And he showed me a pinkie that suddenly enlarged several times its previous size.*

“Good. You have until the sun sets. Have fun!” *I managed and Bob grinned, and the grin kept broadening till it cut his head neatly in half horizontally and he was a full three-hundred-and-sixty degrees of sharp needle teeth gritted in feral mischief.*

Then flinging his bib over his shoulders before one of his broodlings appeared with a fan to make the thing billow like a cape, Bob held up his lobster tail and his head flap-jawed like those cartoon characters on that comedy channel.

“I am Bob! And I’m from Can-A-DA!” *his head flopping haphazardly detached from his lower jaw.* “I hereby will cause chaos and mayhem and ne’er-do-well from now until sunset! Fairy dragons... ASSEMBLE!” *and then he and his broodling leapt out the window, the broodling still with a fan.*

Every action had an equal and opposite reaction... and a Fairy Dragon reaction... was a fucking sight to behold!

The stage was dark at first before there was a loud clunk, revealing a grand Canadian and American pair of flags before a figure strode up on top of it, a fairy dragon named Bob wearing the brown of a U.S. army general, his ears folded around his head like a K-Pan military helmet and his chest glistening with battle pins and medals. For a creature so chaotic, it was strange to see him walk with military precision.

More than three hundred fairy Dragons were at the ready in rank and file before the stage as Bob came to stand before them like General Patton.

“My children, our commander-in-chief is sending us to war. Now I won’t lie to you,” and he began to pace. “Not all of you will return alive. But I promise... with team work, and with perseverance, we shall defeat the enemy.” The broodlings started cheering and he held up a hand till they quieted. “We... have been given the fundamental task to chase these miscreants out of town.

“These miscreants... are the enemy to every supernatural creature, they are the vaunted G-men.” The broodlings booed. “We’ve been given the opportunity, nay the honor... to rout them from our midst!” cheers. “To send them crying home to mommy!” still more cheers. “We’re going to WAR!” and Bob ripped off his uniform and in unison the three hundred something fairy dragons flew up into the air heading for a lone RV that was situated outside.

I took one look at Anhogamon and mentioned, “This cannot end well.” And we two sat back and watched the entertainment in a simple porch swing.

Fairy dragons like all Fae-type creatures, though we are the only dragons that have this ability, are all empowered by a special power called ‘Glamour.’ It is a natural skill that hides us from mortal eyes. For some, it makes them look like something completely different. Ugly Scottish Troll looks like a little old lady, Puck looks like some dorky guy in a suit, and so on, but with us, it renders us completely invisible to both natural and unnatural or even supernatural eyes, and at the most we look like pretty-pretty butterflies. Other dragons and even Fae cannot see us if we don’t want them to, but the real trick is that not even video cameras, machines being the bane of magic and can often see through illusions, could even see us.

So standing atop my shrine, I got to see very well the harassment of the government agents.

I won’t tell you of all the things they did but Fairy Dragon trickery is an art form. It needs to begin... subtly... and end with an explosion.

It began with one little fairy dragon tapping equipment out of alignment. They’d push a camera aside and then someone on the inside would realign it remotely. They’d tap it again and it’d get realigned again, then they’d push it one way or the other, and though mooning the camera was ineffectual, no one on the other side of the camera would see it, the little drakes nonetheless did it anyways.

They spat on door knobs and handles, putting a sticky resin on it and likewise greased the steps at the back of the RV... so when someone finally did come investigate...

I had to admit, it was rather humorous seeing the man step out, slip off the steps and bounce first on his butt and then his head straight to the pavement before cursing. After inspecting the camera that’s been pissed on and only the Maker knows what else they did with it and he cleans the foul-smelling gunk off, he has to go back inside the RV, only to get his hand stuck on the door knob.

I afforded myself a chuckle when he got his hand stuck.

Depending upon the age of the Fairy Dragon, their spit could be the consistency of WD-forty, or it could be a fast acting epoxy resin. Though not officially plastic, it was nonetheless a rather cementing thing, and getting one's hand unstuck was like ripping a tongue off after it licked a frozen flag pole.

And the worst thing is... there really isn't any solvent for that spit...

I had to admit the 'hang a model of a flying saucer' bit in front of the cameras was rather funny... and opening the manhole cover out the front door of the RV so the next agent slipped right into the sewer was even funnier. Screams from down below issued forth before a frantic man covered in poo escaped the sewer before a giant paw the thickness of the sewer hole trying to get at him was enough to frazzle most men's minds, and he did draw a side arm, but one of his compatriots exited and stopped him from actually firing.

To make the man even more frazzled, what he said and saw, though obvious to him, his compatriot could see nothing of... because it was an illusion just for the one the joke was for... and anyone like myself who can see the magic making the illusion.

The massive paw gripped the manhole cover and slammed it down onto its hole.

The fake hurricane storm was laughable. It began with a leaf, the blowing of things, while several of the little drakes snuck into the RV through air vents and made various things on the inside of the RV happen, like the toilet backing up, the water faucets to turn on, books and plates and things to fly out of their holders while the dragons rocked the RV back and forth amidst Bob sitting in a director's chair with goggles on while a giant fan blew from behind him and was sprayed with water from a fire plug.

"Debris!" Bob shouted and several branches, a tree, two men in a row boat, the wicked witch of the north, several trees and a cow was floated by their windows amidst thrown sticks and leaves before a hailstorm of golf ball then softball then bowling ball and then the talent-sized hail mentioned in the Book of Revelations for the End of Days was thrown onto their roof. "That's right! There is no cow level! Moo!" Bob shouted... and the mayhem just got worse.

It was the end of the day, the sun was setting, and Bob stepped forward, plodding along the outside of the damaged RV before grabbing the directional microphone and pulling it from its housing and holding it up to his mouth, and taking a deep, deep breath that made his chest expand impossibly... he began to sing 'Master Exploder' by: Tenacious D, doing Jack Black's part in the song while a band of his little impish broodlings did the instrumentation.

This directional microphone was of course the device that everyone in that RV had a pair of private headphones on in order to hear sounds outside the vehicle.

As Bob began with the steadily rising scream, the RV rattled and shook, and when the top of the scream came all the windows shattered.

If you don't know what I'm talking about, You Tube 'Master Exploder Live' and you'll get the full of it.

Nevertheless, it got to the point of:

*“I don’t need... a microphone... my voice is fucking... **BOUNTIFUL!**” and the interior of the RV exploded outward, scattering all its innards before three people, two men and a woman disgorged from the inside with their hair frazzled and their clothes burnt and smoking.*

Bob continued with the song, his voice blowing the three over and sending the woman into throes of ecstasy, before he blew one of the men’s mind’s. Well... not literally. Just figuratively... to him it looked like the top of his head and his brains exploded, but that didn’t really happen... though he did faint dead away immediately thereafter.

The remaining man was chased off by invisible things giggling and throwing sticks and stones and snowballs – in June – at him, and with hands above his head he ran down the street, right before an ambulance arrived and three men jumped out to get the remaining man and woman onto a stretcher.

Right before they closed the doors though – I could see that they were broodlings through their disguises – one of them leaned in and smiled saying: “Wanna see something really scary?” and pulled a Twilight Zone the Movie on the remaining two, accompanied by screams as they drove off.

And then the sun set.

“How was that mister doubting drake? Impressed, huh?” Bob said as he sat back dressed like a starlet in a recliner with an umbrella and a Mojito – a human-sized Mojito, not fairy dragon-sized one – sitting on a table too small to hold the drink. A multi bendy-straw was angled to his mouth as he sipped from it.

“Bob... you have special powers.” I commented and suddenly he leapt up out of those clothes and looked at his hands.

“With these powers... I could... be a superhero! Fight for world peace!” and then he looked at me and grinned. “But first...”

“Don’t... stick a muffler up his ass.” I commented. “You’ve done enough.”

“What?! Oh come on! That was just getting started! We can drive them insane!”

“No Bob,” I chuckled. “Temperance. They’ll think twice before coming here, especially after you destroyed a multi-million dollar observation vehicle that they deployed to get proof on a hunch no less. Regardless... you’ve all earned a reward. I have some ice cream in the kitchen...”

“Ice cream?” Bob started suddenly, very attentive and drooling. “You didn’t mention... ice cream.”

Fairy dragons had a sweet tooth. I mean we really had a sweet tooth. Literally in fact. It was also called the candy tooth, and it was a barb in the roofs of our mouths that acted like a sharp tongue to enhance sweet things. For young dragons, ice cream was a tasty treat sufficient enough to satisfy them, but for me, I had this craving for fresh Pomegranates from time to time that I wasn’t... always... too proud of.

“Thirty One flavors. All yours and your brood’s... just don’t mess up...”

“Hey kids! We get to raid the freezer! Ice cream and all its fixings for all!”

And three hundred cheering bodies flew by me in something akin to a locust swarm... and I was pretty sure Bob Tea-bagged me before he left while one fairy dragon with a ghetto blaster was playing 'Immigrant Song' by: Led Zeppelin. Creepy...

"...The kitchen." I mentioned, now covered with all sorts of debris, my robes covered in Graffiti and... once again... only the Maker knew what else.

Looking sidelong at the remaining broodling with the ghetto blaster, he grinned and promptly shut the thing off, making it disappear behind his back before flying off, squealing: "Wait for me!"

Exhaling a sigh, I tapped my staff and all the detritus on and around me disappeared as I shook my head.

"Broodlings."

Mew was tongue bathing her newborn kittens, massaging them and cleaning them with her tongue comb after having devoured the afterbirth on each little kitten.

Seven of them.

Ivan was strutting proudly, chest out, chin up as he pranced back and forth nodding to nothing in particular.

"Ivan... you're incorrigible." I mentioned to him while Lilly sat in the corner wide-eyed and unblinking, watching Mew take care of her kittens, some already latched onto her teats. "He's walking around like he did all the work."

"Sdrasvete moya tovarichka" Ivan mumbled.

He was just a crotch grab away from the ghetto pimp walk.

There was a shuffling sound down the narrow opening into the room when Pen suddenly stepped in, rapping his staff on the stone wall to announce his entry.

"Pardon me for intruding. Ah... congratulations are in order I see." He mentioned as he entered with his two lower arms cradling some books.

"Penny. Look! Look! Look! Look!" Lilly mentioned and gestured with both hands at Mew and her kittens.

The seven had their eyes closed; still moist from amniotic fluids, but the lot of them were various shades of grey, white and black. There was even a tortoise shell in there... like me! Colorings were off – no browns for instance – but regardless... KAWAII!

"They're beautiful Mew..."

"Hey!" Ivan grunted. "Don't I get any congratulations? I helped."

Pen smirked as Mew, myself and even Lilly all turned to look straight at him.

“Ivan...” *Pen began.* “You’re the male. You need to learn that five minutes of impregnation does not entitle you to the months of carrying young, the hours of birthing young, or the following months of raising young. You need to be aware that ugly kids are blamed on you and beautiful kids are blamed on the female. Inadvertently, telling Mew that her kittens are beautiful likewise is telling you that you at least didn’t help create any ugly ones.

“Be aware also... that you can have congratulations the next time you push seven living creatures outside of an orifice that was originally only a fraction of the size. You stood around and watched, and be grateful for that in the fact that you never have to go through this.”

I giggled and Mew gave her newest born kitten a few more licks. “Thank you Master Pendragon,” *she greeted and smelt his hand that he offered before he rubbed her head. Her neck bell jingled as she rubbed her cheek against his hand right before Lilly snatched him up and squealed.*

“I want a baby too!” *She cried.* “She’ll be strong and beautiful and pink and...”

Pen started laughing. “Ok... ok... but before you do, Lilly... perhaps I should instruct you on what it takes to have a baby.”

Lilly held Pen out like a doll. “But Mew did it, and she’s just a little thing. She was really happy during it too. Probably the endorphins. Nya!”

“Indeed it is, but I brought some picture books to help you learn.” *And he offered them to her and she took them and began flipping through them as I gathered the bloodied fur blanket that Mew was on with her nursing kittens in preparation of leaving with them.*

Pen was going to have his hands full teaching that fem what it took to have a baby. But as I was preparing to leave, Lilly’s face looked rather confused as she was looking at pictures of sex.

“OMG Ewwww!” *she scoffed and held the book at length with both eyes closed tight.*

I couldn’t help but smirk, my expression was shared by Pen even. But then she slowly opened one eye, and then just like any sort of wreck – in which sex was easily described as – no one could look away from a wreck. But then slowly she turned her head to it and opened both eyes, intently scanning it and then beamed at Pen.

“Wait... I’ve seen this before!” *she said with glee.* “I know how to do this! Nee!”

“Y-you do?” *Pen asked.* *He was genuinely surprised... it was an interesting thing to see. He was never surprised.*

“Sure... I watched a male and a female doing this... and... this happened!” *and she tapped a picture of a pregnant woman with her swollen belly.*

Pen looked at me with a smirk.

“Hey... I swear. Unless she’s been sneaking into our room, Mady and I have only been knocking boots in our rooms.”

“No... not you silly.” *Lilly giggled.*

“Then who? Remy and Sen?” *Pen asked; his face light with the humor of this.*

“Ba’ab and Pun’t’ang.” *She answered with glee, and very suddenly, the emotion in the room turned cold, and the coloring in Pen’s face quite literally drained from his face and body, his form turning from reds and blues and rainbow colors to ashen grey and white with black trimming. Lilly caught this immediately and gasped. “D-did I say something wrong?”*

Pen turned slightly.

“I... I’ll be back later, Lilly.” *He said emotionlessly, his face full of shock, and when the color bled back into his face, I saw anger in his green eyes, and his body seemed to burn with the anger. Lilly became afraid.*

“P-Penny.” *She mewed and Pen caught his demeanor and smiled for her benefit.*

“I’m all right Lilly. We’ll discuss the books later... I... need to check on something very, very urgent that just came up.”

“Okies...” *Lilly said and Pen hurried out. Lilly and I merely looked at each other and shrugged at each other in confusion.*

Please don’t be right, please don’t be right...

I hurried along through the halls, rushing for the first time in as long as I could remember, knowing a sort of anxiety that hadn’t been present within these scales and plates for ages. I was even flying along my wings, a glistening light of blue-green as I hurried through the halls, looking for Pun’t’ang. Her present condition would belie the truth of this matter.

When Lilly said what she said, immediately I became aware that I’d not seen Poon specifically for a long time... and those of you who are reading this, you know what I mean. Poon the person... not the... the um... yeah you understand what I mean.

I couldn’t sense her out; I couldn’t feel her presence, which meant that Bob and his brood were hiding her from me.

Being a Fairy Dragon myself, I knew of the sorts of places she would be, where she would recluse herself, and I checked various locations such as broom closets, beneath the shrine’s elevated floor boards, any place dark and dry, steadily climbing higher and higher within my shrine till I came to the short and narrow stairs leading up to the attic storage room.

Taking a deep breath I floated up the stairs, tremulously placed a hand on the sliding door at its top and slid it open.

There, on a spare Japanese mattress, the thin ground laying floor pad that had been used in Japan for ages, a thing called a Tatami laid a rounding and very pregnant Poon.

“Is that you, Bob?” *she moaned as she clasped a great rounded belly that had already become half her total body weight. She turned to me and froze, her great eyes widening as she bent legs and arms protectively about her belly.*

Suddenly I understood exactly why my powers of precognition have been so mutated as of late. I mentally recalculated backward toward all of the past occurrences as to why I didn’t see why something had happened. The

Broodlings trying to use their magic on the vault that held Anhogamon modified the conditions and caused Anho to thaw prematurely. The fight with Madoushi and Lee brought on by additional practical jokes by Bob and his brood. I never saw it happen because without them here it wouldn't've happened. And so on.

Fairy dragons as a whole weren't immune to my precognition unless one of them was a wild card, in which case my precognition would only be slightly off, not grandly off. The only remaining truth stuck me like a poisoned knife in my hearts and twisted as cruelly as Remy's grandfather had done.

I trusted them, I brought them into my home, I provided for them, I helped them... and they repaid me by magicing me and hiding their entire brood from my foresight!

Memory struck me as I realized that I hadn't seen something so momentous as Bob and Poon coming to me for a place to stay. I'd dismissed my not seeing it that it was a matter too small for my precognition to catch, but brining three hundred broodlings along with them... That was momentous all right.

They used their powers against me! They blinded me!

"Honey... I brought you some ice cream for our wonderful little..." Bob's voice came up the stairs before he stopped, seeing me there before the door. I didn't look at him, I just slowly closed the door and it shut with a click.

Bob swallowed noticeably, while within his hands was a gigantic banana split.

"Ok... look boss... I know this looks bad... but I can explain." Bob began as I slowly turned; my face utterly passive... which wasn't a good sign. My hand on my staff was steadily tightening, the wood groaning beneath my grip as I strode forward, and the shrine shook briefly from a micro earthquake. "First Poon and I were flying along, you see, and we felt a little bit, peckish and..." and I reached up and gripped Bob's antenna and ears and began dragging him along with me."...Ow... Ow.... Ow.... Ow!"

And with a violent crack that splintered the wood around me that I was so furious, I teleported with the little bugger and slammed him against a wall in an octagonal room of my own construction in a place where only I had access to. Or rather, someone else could gain access to it... so long as they found a room sized construct somewhere in the ether that encompassed the entire multiverse.

*"Do you have any idea... what you've **Done?!**" Roared right into his face, going so far as to spread the two mandibles of my lower jaw.*

I'd just lost my temper for the second time in a single damn month... and now that I looked at it, it was Bob and his brood who caused both of them!

"Hey! Fuck you! You heartless..." Bob began but I shook him and slammed him against the wall again, before I lifted one hand and a Dragon Lore unfolded from it, a Lore being Draconic Lore Magic... the utmost superior magical form of Dragonkind, grades above what nearly any human on Earth could accomplish. It was this lore that I slapped against Bob's chest and it immediately unfolded.

The lore spread, writing magic circle after magic circle as Bob was forced to spread eagle, four arms being drawn apart, legs being drawn wide, tail straight down, ears and antennae being drawn painfully wide and his head largely immobilized like a Fairy Dragon version of the Vitruvian Man.

“Shut... up!” *I shouted at him and lifting my hand and tweaking the circle, I made the circles spread and pull him slightly like he was on a rack, and he grit his teeth and mandibles as his body groaned and his plates clicked.* “I asked you a clear and concise question requiring a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer, Bob. Understand that I will not ask this question politely a third time. Do you... have any idea... what you have... *Done?!?*” *I barked right into his face, and he got to see the two layers of sharp dragon teeth and the four lower mandibles spread in my anger and the room rattled.*

“Well, you need to be more clear in the... ngh....” *I grit my teeth and lifted a hand, stretching him further and holding it as his limbs twisted in the wrong way.*

“You are smarter than this Bob. I know you’re smarter than this, so stop playing dumb. The situation in which I’ve caught you in you cannot possibly be so stupid as to not know that you’ve done wrong, and to continue to lie and avoid the question is just pissing me off. I have not lost my temper in eons, Bob, and since coming here you’ve already made me lose it twice, so I will ask just one more time, and if you don’t answer me this time I swear... you will not like it when I lose my temper a third time.” *And I twisted the rings again, Bob gritting his teeth as his boron-silicate bone structure, a crystalline construct, nearly indestructible, started to spiral fracture.*

“Ok! Fine! We did it! I admit to it! We cast a ritual unlimited wish spell against you, to keep you from using your stupid spooky precog against us to find out what tricks we were up to. You happy?!”

“No Bob. No I’m not. Now I’m angry. Now I’m really, really, really... angry.” *I said as I stamped my staff so that it’d stand up straight before I removed my layers of robes and hung them around the staff.* “You want to know how angry I am? Look at me... I’m completely calm. I’ve gone past being perturbed, past pissed off, past major psychotic fucking hatred... right now... I’m so angry I’m absolutely calm. You’re in danger Bob. Truly... truly you are. But... do you know *why* I’m angry?”

“Oh la-de-da... so you can’t see what trickery we are up to. So what... so fucking what? And I’m surprised at you! You haven’t even asked why yet. You want to know why you pontificating bastard?”

I raised an eyebrow at him. “Why?”

“Desperation! Yeah... you remember that word don’t you Pendragon? Do you remember the word desperation? When was the last time you were desperate? When was the last time you tasted desperate hmm?”

I folded two arms and rested a third on my hip as the fourth continued gripping my staff. “Right now, actually... but I find this fascinating... what sort of desperation are we talking about, Bob... and then I’ll explain the sort of desperation a dragon in my position experiences.”

Bob blinked, but persevered. “Our home was a forest on the mainland. You want to know what happened to that forest? What happened to the un-hatched broodlings in that forest? They tore it down, cut down all the trees, crushed all our eggs... to put in a shopping mall! A fucking shopping mall!! Have you ever watched everything you know destroyed right before your very eyes?”

I pursed my lips and tapped my staff with one finger. “Many times... but go on... I’m still waiting to hear the level of desperation that you have that outweighs my own. Talk carefully Bob, this is your only chance to redeem yourself.”

“What do you mean outweighs your own? Those are my *children!* You have any idea what it’s like to be displaced from your home and watch your children die?! Mister... been here for half a million years!”

“Yes.” *I replied and grit my teeth at him and he blinked at me.* “Tell me Bob... do you have any idea what it’s like to send your children into the jaws of death, knowing full well that they won’t ever return?” *Bob stared at me as I leaned into his face.* “Do you have any idea of foreseeing the moment of death for those children, and knowing that, no matter what, you cannot do a single damn thing to stop it?!” *I was gritting my teeth at him.* “Now let me ask you another question... what if you did know how to stop it, and you could stop it this time, but some upstart comes in and fucks up your vision of that way... of... stopping... it?!” *I snarled and poked him sharply in the chest on those last four words.* “Now imagine this, Bob, and this is really, really the most important question of all, what is this danger that you willingly send the children who’ve lived with you, studied with you, you watched them take their first steps, learned their first spells, spoke their first words, who with open arms waddle toward you as infants and call you daddy, and despite that danger, you still, willingly, send them to their deaths and meet their fates?”

Bob’s expression was slack and blank.

“You look confused... here... let me help you realize what sort of danger and stress I’m under.” *And I lifted a hand, a new kind of lore appeared across the back of that hand, and out of the center of that lore extended an angry red spike.*

“Whoa... whoa wait!” *but I plunged the knife directly into his skull and right into his brain, his eyes going white for a moment before I sucked us both into a memory of mine.* “What the... where are we?” *Bob asked looking around at the mountain top we were on, overlooking the lush forests of the Amazon.* “Why is it so bright?”

He was still locked in my spell circles, but I gestured to them and they relaxed.

“Beautiful isn’t it? This is the Amazon... one of the most lush forests on earth.” *I mentioned and palmed all four hands behind my back and Bob looked sidelong at me.* “Beautiful... pristine isn’t it.”

Bob eyed me in fear. “Pen... Why is it so bright?” *Bob asked again, and then turned his head.* “And why don’t I hear anything? What about all the animals?”

“Why? Because they all understand that they are all about to die.” *I replied... and his face went slack.* “By the way Bob... what was that you said earlier about everything you hold dear destroyed before your very eyes?”

And it happened...

There was a flash, and I nonchalantly looked up, right as a radial sphere radiated from none other than the sun itself.

“W-what is that?” *Bob gasped at the rapidly approaching sphere.*

“The end of the world, Bob.” *I replied calmly.*

“What?!”

“From the one source that we on this planet don’t really pay attention to. The sun. Oh it’s always there, it rises and it sets, it disappears for six months in the poles and it can cook you alive in the deserts. It’s responsible for all life on Earth through photosynthesis... but it is nonetheless a fiery ball hundreds of thousands of degrees that’s surrounded by an electromagnetic sphere and is often times prone to fits of... *sporadic violence.*”

Bob began to jostle violently. “Let me out! We need to flee!”

“No Bob. I want you to see this. I want you to understand my... how did you put it? Oh yes... Desperation.”

The minutes passed by, and then the wave hit. It struck the Earth at a distance, and the resultant explosion of hundreds of thousands of degree fire immediately ignited the atmosphere. A wall that was higher than the outer atmosphere billowed before us, carving the surface of the earth off like a metal scraper on the grill, disintegrating trees and flash-evaporating oceans and seas no matter how deep they were... all life, even microbiologicals, perished the moment the wall hit them.

In its wake, a seared atmosphereless land existed, a planet open to the very depths of space... dead... black... charred earth cracked with fire.

“What... the Fuck... was that?!”

“That... *Bob*... is what I contend with. In the face of that, you losing a brood to the carelessness of man is chump’s change. That is the end of the world, the End of Days. You want to know how important your little problems are in comparison to that? Nadda, nilch, zip... *NOTHING!*” *I bellowed into his face and the charred earth disappeared in favor of my white octagonal room. “Fucking... nothing! Six-point-eight billion human beings, four-point-one billion alternative beings... rendered to silt and ash instantly! And you want to know what Bob?! If that happens, if this comes to pass, it will now be... all... your... fault!”*

Bob’s eyes dilated as his face grew slack.

“D-don’t you blame this on me! I didn’t do anything!”

“Oh no? Well let’s see here. First of all we wouldn’t even know that this was coming without mine and other’s precognitive powers. So we understand now how useful it is. And what did you do to mine? Oh hell... you just blocked that out now didn’t you? Now what happens when a key component – that’s me – to this all of a sudden is removed from the equation? Do you know what it is I do? Do you have any *fucking* idea what I’ve been doing for the past half million years? Do you have any *inkling* as to what I’ve been doing to preserve this planet from... *that?!*”

Bob stared at me, slowly shaking his head.

“Bloodlines cultivated and empowered, father to son, mother to daughter, countless and I do mean countless generations to produce the right people. Now the right people in the wrong place are just as bad as the wrong people in the right place. *How do I know what that right place is now Bob?*”

*He began to tremble and I strode forward and hooked my claws into the throat guard he had over the hollow of his throat and pulled him to me in the spell circle. “Tell me. When and where is the right fucking place, Bob? You seem to think that you’re wiser and more powerful than me, so let’s place the welfare of the entire planet in your hands! I presently have four people that I must put in the right place at the right time to augment the solar system on a planetary scale to protect the Earth. One of which even *with* my powers intact, I have no idea where to put her because she is a wild card! If my pieces aren’t all in place... we... all... **die!***

“Where do I put them you crass little shit?! Where do I put them?” *Bob stammered and I slapped him. “Where?!” and he stammered again, shaking his head. Again I slapped him, cracking his cheek plate. “Where?!” He began to cry and I gripped his throat guard and punched him now with enough strength to shatter the scales and plates on*

one whole side of his face before I ripped them off. “Where?! God Damn it?! WHERE?!” I was crying, tears of desperation leaking off my face and he saw it now, saw the desperation in me.

“I don’t know!” *he screamed and immediately began to sob and I stepped back. “I fucked up! I fucked up bad!! I’m sorry! I didn’t know!”*

I balled my fists open and closed, taking several calming breaths. “Every action has a reaction equal in magnitude and opposite in direction... and a Fairy Dragon Reaction is a fucking sight to behold.” I said quietly. “The end of the world is presently in your hands now, Bob. Your actions have currently made you responsible; your actions caused this... you made this.”

“No...” *he croaked and shook his head.*

“So you will unmake it.” *I told him. “You will swear an oath, you will swear to it or I will punish you for your actions right here and now. You are charged with the willful interference of a Dragon High Council Member and the premeditated destruction of the Earth.”*

“I didn’t know!”

“That doesn’t matter!” *I shouted back at him. “You are at fault! You are the error! You are the cause! The whole Earth, and the nearly ten billion inhabitants on her are your responsibility! You will swear or you’ll suffer the penalty right here and now.”*

“P-Penalty?!”

“There is only one punishment for defying the High Council, Bob...” *I said warningly and he squealed from the thought of it.*

The Ancient Egyptians created the Hom-Dai. It was a punishment for the most wicked of blasphemers, to be mummified alive. Before the Hom-Dai, the Dragons had created a rather similar punishment. It’s name cannot be repeated in any human tongue, it lacks the sound imitation for some of the vowels, but essentially, roughly translated, it would be best explained as ‘Disassembly.’

Layer by Layer, a dragon is disassembled, plates pried off, then scales, then layer by layer hide and flesh are sheered away. Muscles are stripped clean one sinew at a time and bones are shattered while organs are torn apart, and disintegrated, right before the Dragon’s soul is splintered and shattered and scattered. But like the Hom-Dai... a dragon is awake and aware when this punishment is done to them... and feels every last moment of it.

“You must reap punishment for what you’ve done. You did this willingly, but you didn’t know the consequences. I’ll be lenient because of that, but you must swear a binding oath, that you will do everything in your power to undo what you’ve done.”

Bob thought about it, hanging in his bonds shaking his head and sobbing while I folded my arms and whisked my tail. And then... finally...

“I... swear...” *He whimpered out, sounding like a child who’d just shot his own father dead accidentally when he found his dad’s loaded gun in the closet.*

I set my jaw and stepped to him and plunged my claws into his chest, and another Lore, a Binding Lore, irradiated around Bob's Heart Stone, locking the oath to him, and with a crack he and I reappeared in the hallway and he dropped to the floor.

Stepping to my robes, I began to pull them on.

"Get this damn curse off me, Bob. You have one hour." I gripped my staff as he nodded meekly, and lowering my gaze to the spilt ice cream, I gestured my staff at it and it reassembled itself and cleaned itself from the dust of the hallway floor. "Oh and... congratulations on your upcoming brood. Poon will be waiting for her treat."

I turned and walked down the stairs, listening to Bob's sobs as he rose with the treat, turned to the door, opened it, and brought his prize to Poon's delight.

Chapter 7: Peace

I am Fellania Bloodclaw.

I'd awoken in bed with Anhogamon. No... it wasn't like that. His mission had suddenly become my mission... so this ass still remains untapped, but nevertheless we *had* slept together... underclothes on. Because of that, I had a soggy wet spot between my legs from morning ejaculation, and my undershirt had been moistened down with milk and sweat so that it was transparent. I was practically naked with the wet nightie effect...

It was I who awoke first, feeling sticky and moist... and a little groggy. I'd not gotten as much sleep as I wanted, but nevertheless I'd never enjoyed just laying in bed before, for this time I got to listen to the all-so powerful heartbeat of my beloved Anhogamon. He'd embraced me, he'd held me... it was our first time, and despite that my body had secreted all its love juices, none of you girls can say anything about this, because in a similar circumstance you would wake up like this too!

So what if the cleft of my sex and it's super-erect clit could be seen through the white panties I wore?

But nevertheless, I wanted... I *so* wanted a penis in me right now. Sex me, love me... fuck the living shit out of me... but regardless it'd become unbearable, and I was trembling for want of it. Only the thought that today might be the last day that my suffering ended did I rise studiously instead of following through with my original thoughts upon seeing Anhogamon pitching a tent next to me and riding his bone like it was a saddle horn.

Sighing, rising, going to the shower, I stripped out of those sticky underclothes wrung them out, squeezing out some of the most torridly smelling juices in creation. My nectar, sweat and milk could totally make a love potion number-nine if mixed together right now... that... or an incredibly potent aphrodisiac. You want something to slip in you guy's drinks, girls? Get him all riled up like a bronco that's hot-to-trot? Come see me right now and I'll hook you up. The intensity of the smell of that mixture that I promptly washed down the drain by turning the shower on only made me even more aroused as I stepped into an icy cold shower and just stood there, squeezing milk from my tits and rubbing my crotch while I let the cold, cold water try to cool me down.

How much I'd give for artesian water right now...

I was erect all the time now, blushing... *all the time*. My pussy clenched and squeezed and my loins churned that I needed above all some sort of release. I was nearing heat madness... a state we females sometimes get into after denying our heats for a prolonged period of time. It was the opposite of postmortem depression... we got excited,

stronger even, energetic. It was not uncommon in our body's need to relieve the tension and avoid heat poisoning that we'd go and try to rape a guy to release this tension.

So in the privacy of the shower... I released a little tension at the very least and made love to myself, sucking some milk off both tits while teasing the nipples with my lips and tongue while likewise rubbing my loins into climax before cleaning myself with soap and shampoo.

Drying and dressing, by the time I left the shower room Anho was already awake... somehow cleaned and his hair combed straight, donning a samurai's armor... black with gold trim and filigree, while at his hip was his simple sword in its bamboo scabbard, and likewise accompanied by a similar Wakizashi.

"Are you ready?" he asked me tenuously as I entered, striding to White Oak's planter.

"I'm ready." I replied quietly, feeling my loins churn even as White Oak twisted and uprooted itself, becoming a staff in my hands now that glistened briefly with arcane runes from one tip to the other.

He and I stepped in together, a Druidess and a Samurai, how unlikely a combination, but we exited the bedroom we were sharing in the wee twilight hours, descending the stairs into the main hall of the Shrine, an octagonal chamber at the center of the shrine where the masters met to deliberate. It was also the place where the doorway to Sue's ancestor's scrolls was, and presently where Pendragon himself stood.

But there was a surprise here... shown in the form of Sue and Mad.

"Good morning." Pen greeted and Anho bowed sharply at the waist and I quickly curtsied to follow suit, before we looked to Sue and Madoushi in question. "I must apologize, but due to an... unforeseen happenstance... I cannot personally transport you to the Cradle." Pen mentioned and Anho and I looked at each other. "Additionally... I find that it is important that Madoushi and Susan accompany you as well."

"But... Master Pendragon..." Anho began and Pen lifted a hand.

"Please take it on faith, Anhogamon. They must go with you. As for your transportation, I've made other arrangements, Anhogamon, and based upon the circumstances... I should suppose that you'd welcome this company."

"Forgive me, I do not understand." Anho mentioned, and Pen merely smiled. He looked... tired.

Pen merely turned and gestured, and a... creature... ducked underneath the doorway leading into the octagonal room that he was so big, and before I knew it, Anhogamon had dropped to his knees, bent over and pressed his head against the floor so quickly that I swore he must've slapped his face against it.

The new person was... a dragon... as best as I could determine, mostly gold and white with a splaying realm of long and thick horns, a long and lean, almost serpentine body and neck with long arms and legs with a tail easily as long as he was tall swaying about his feet. Two gossamer wings hung about his body like a campaign cloak, and he had a plethora of swords arrayed about him. Scars from battle, the sorts of scars that don't heal even on a supernaturally healing creature like him, had etched several lines across his face, chest and arms, but despite that he wore plates and guards of a samurai as well.

“Master Abraxis.” Anhogamon said muffled with face against the floor. “I am not so worthy to be...” and the new comer stepped in with a swaying of his tail, dropped down, gripped Anhogamon by the back armor and hauled him easily to his feet.

“None of that now. Have pride in yourself, soldier. I will not have someone so honored as you defacing himself for the likes of me.” The dragon replied with a deep rumbling voice.

“But...” Anho protested and received a stern look from this one called Abraxis.

“The day of groveling as a form of placating oneself before one’s supposed superiors are long... long over, Anhogamon. Honor isn’t so much as a rigorous thing anymore. You do not cut someone down because they dishonored you, you do not challenge others because you think their ways are idiocy, and more so you don’t degrade yourself, even to a superior... as questionable as that may be in this case.”

“Who... is this?” Sue asked quietly, trying to get Pen’s attention, but it was Anhogamon who answered, standing at attention as well as any soldier might.

“This is... the Empress’s own personal guard.” Anho replied.

“Empress?” I blinked. “You mean *your* Empress? The fem who sent you on your quest in the first place?”

“Yes.” Abraxis replied, and there was sadness in his voice. “Though of all the enemies I’ve ever fought to protect the Empress, the one that I was helpless against was time itself. The world would be a much better place if my sword could only keep that specter from slowly abating her. If she were Empress of the world, then this place would be a far warmer place.”

“I’d have to agree with your assessment, Master Abraxis.” Pen mentioned. “But Panda wasn’t a warmonger.”

“People would bow knee to her because they wanted to, Grandmaster.” Abraxis mentioned. “But enough of my... queen. I am to be your honor guard and transport today. I shall guard your entrance into the Cradle.”

“Not that I don’t appreciate it... but why would we need a guard into and out of the cradle?” I asked.

“The cradle is as chaotic as it is natural.” Pen replied. “With the Earth considered to be female, the cradles is... well it’s her...”

“Vagina?” Sue said in exasperation.

Why is it that males could speak about their pricks but they couldn’t speak about our sexes so easily?

“Birth canal.” Pen mentioned. “As such... it is the place where life is at its most plentiful... and its most dangerous. A million species die out a day... it makes you wonder how many are created at the same time. You will be in the deepest darkest chasm of purest life. All of you will be in the very life streams where spiritual forces of the not yet alive and the recently dead wave in and out repeatedly at the cradle. Though the probability of danger isn’t too paramount... it is still possible for you to run into things that should otherwise be extinct in the Congo.”

“Congo?” Sue asked.

“Extinct?” I blinked.

“Yes the Congo. The deepest, densest forest on all of the whole Earth.” Pen replied, looking nonchalantly at his claws. “And extinct... Like a T-Rex or two. But regardless, where we’ll be dropping you off, we hope that you can avoid not only the denizens of the cradle, but the denizens around the cradle.”

“Denizens... around the cradle?” Madoushi asked inquisitively.

My own mind immediately thought of the Denizens in Vlad’s castle, and I’m certain that that’s what Mady and Sue were thinking of too, but I shook that thought off. Of course there wouldn’t be actual Denizens around something like the cradle.

“Gaia’s cradle is located in the Democratic Republic of the Congo,” Abraxis mentioned. “In the deepest darkest portion of the Congo, inside a national park where most will tell you that if you go in too deep... then you don’t come back. Surrounding it, however... is some rather chaotic political warfare and has been so for the past fifty years. Pirates, brigands, slavers... every sort of criminal organization you can imagine.”

“Including a rather lucrative sex slavery.” Pen mentioned with a raised eyebrow at Sue and me.

“I’d like to see them try!” Sue bit out.

“Over my dead body...” I scoffed.

“And mine.” Anho and Mady reiterated and Pen nodded.

“Suffice it to say, you’ll be ported to an area that is quite easily well away from the hubbub of people. If you do run into people, they will be tribesmen who probably have never seen a white man before.”

“Why aren’t you coming with us?” I asked.

“A sudden and very demanding issue has brought itself to my attention.” Pen replied and explained no more details than that about it. “I’ve spent all night preparing and sadly I’m still not prepared for it.” He rubbed his temple with a hand. “Given the circumstances, I thought that the one other person that Anhogamon would trust would be the best person to send along with you both.”

“Your judgment is as always impeccable, master Pendragon.” Anho bowed promptly.

“Let’s hope that keeps up.” Pen mumbled.

“But what about Sue and Mady?” I asked. “Not that I’m ungrateful... but I thought... well I thought it was just going to be Anhogamon and me going to the cradle.”

Sue bit her lip. She knew how into Anho I was, and she realized even if Madoushi didn’t, on what I was hoping to accomplish at the Cradle. This was supposed to be his and my adventure.

“Safety in numbers.” Pen explained. “And currently the numbers here are too great and the numbers where you’re going is too little.”

All five of us, Abraxis included, all turned to look at Pendragon.

“Could you be any more cryptic or obvious Grandmaster?” Abraxis mentioned.

“You of all people should trust my judgment by now Abraxis,” Pen said with a smirk. “But anyways...” he waved his staff and Anho’s box dropped from a portal before Anho stepped forward to pick it up. “All of you... good luck, and be safe.” And Pen opened his hand, and a grand rotating portal opened nearly from floor to ceiling, and the five of us filed through it, arriving on a ridge of a mountain.

Where it was about four A.M. in Japan, it was about eight P.M. in the Congo. The sun was setting here.

The Congo was a rain forest... it rained here twice every day right on schedule... you could set your watch to it. The forest was likewise thick... thicker than any other forest in the world... so thick so dense so tall that at high noon the trees could block out the sun and throw the area beneath the canopy into utter darkness. It was so thick that the number of species that were in it that humankind didn’t know about was supposedly innumerable. The forest was likewise so thick, that in every direction you looked, one couldn’t see a single habitat, no planes flew over it, no settlements were in it... this was the blackest part of the forest.

It was the sheer fact that we were standing at the top of a raised basin that separated us from the dark forest below that allowed us to actually still see the sun currently. But this ridge was strange because that there were a pair of pillars here that seemed... rather familiar.

I stepped up to one. It was made out of gold, with the tattered remains of a banner, but nonetheless, the gold figure head atop it was unmistakable... a gold eagle atop a swastika.

“Third Reich Germans?” I blinked.

“Thule Occult Society.” Abraxis mentioned. “I’d cut its blasphemy down if I could, but the pillar has bonded with the ether here and is quite indestructible.”

“Who are these people, Fellania?” Anhogamon asked.

“Germans. A race of people who, within their ranks about half a century ago, had set themselves as that they were better than anyone else because they were German, and tried to pull the whole German people along with them in their arrogance. They called themselves the Arian or the Master Race. Blonde hair, blue eyes, white skin... and anyone who wasn’t that was inferior to them and needed to be expunged from the world. Based upon that arrogance, they tried to rule the world.”

“What would that leave of the world if they did that?” Anho asked with a raised eyebrow. I suspected he already knew the answer.

“No one.” Abraxis answered. “No one but them. The Thule Occult Society however, was an organization within the governing core of their ranks, a secret society that sought out ancient artifacts across the world so that they could overcome their enemies through occult means. It was a well versed plan, considering that the rest of the world didn’t believe that magic even existed.

“They sought out and claimed the headpiece of the Spear of Destiny. Their power from that alone grew so great that a small nation like Germany controlled most of the European Continent.”

“The Spear of Destiny?” Mady asked.

“It’s supposedly the spear that pierced the side of Christ.” Sue replied. “When Christ was crucified, a Roman Centurion to speed Christ’s death along stabbed him in the side with the spear.”

“But then the spear was blessed by His own blood on its tip,” Abraxis finished. “And the whole spear became a holy relic despite that it was the weapon of a heretic.”

“Where is the spear now? Does anyone know?” Mady blinked.

“Lost. And good riddance. It’s best that no one ever find such an artifact again. Some things are best left lost.” Abraxis mentioned.

But then I began to notice that there were more pillars and banners.

“Roman legion?” I said moving to another banner that was blessed at its top with another golden eagle.

“Alexander the Great.” Abraxis replied. “I warned his general personally that he was walking into a place he would not survive from. He wouldn’t listen. The bones of his men and he himself lay scattered across the basin just beyond.” And he pointed up the slope toward the nearby ridge.

“Vikings?” Sue said finding another banner.

“Looking for the final resting place of the World Tree that the Great Midgar Wyrms devoured to save the world... and he was cut down by their God Thor for. They feared the coming of Ragnarok... they came finding their World Tree to be long, long dead.” Abraxis then gestured to a totem pole. “This is of the Zulu tribes, this one is of the Lost Emperor of China, this is of Egypt, Atlantis, the Green Elves, the Fae, Dragons... whole armies tread on this ancient and holy ground... some have the sense to turn back and leave their marker... others... journey into the cradle where they aren’t bidden and perish.”

“So what chance to we have?” I asked.

“All the chance in the world.” Anho stated and reaching into the box he carried removed the jar from it and cast the rest of the box aside as if it were garbage. “I will not have come this far to let some supernatural thing keep me from delivering this box.”

“Well spoken Anhogamon,” Abraxis mentioned. “But you speak the same words that I’ve heard hundreds of times and have warned just as many times again. I suffered scars from those who thought to drive my warnings away.”

“Then really... what chance do we have?” Sue asked.

“Your men... nothing... not without a woman to guide them.”

“Us?” Sue and I said in unison.

“Yes... you. The Earth is feminine... the most sacred of feminine. She is called Gaia for a reason. Just like any woman, she will guard her loins, the cradle, from any man attempting to enter it. Without the guidance of a woman... just like the thousands that tried to penetrate her before, your men, yea even Anhogamon and this remarkable sorcerer Madoushi... will perish.”

Sue took close hold of Mady's arm and embraced it, and I found a purchase hold on Anho's back armor as she and I both stared at this dragon.

"Then where do we go from here?" Anho asked.

"Upward to the basin." Abraxis stated and pointed up a sloping trail that looked like an animal game trail. "And I suggest that the females lead you, Anhogamon. If you still have the nonsensical whimsy that all women must follow a man, you will soon find the error of those ways."

"We have names." Sue scoffed, and I likewise stood with one hand on my hip.

"And as of yet I don't know it." Abraxis raised an eyebrow.

"Fellania." I replied tersely.

"Susan." Sue added.

"A pleasure to meet you. Now move quickly. You need to enter the basin before nightfall."

"Why before nightfall?" Madoushi asked.

"The cradle's defenses are far worse at night." Abraxis mentioned. "I shall wait here. I have no reason to be in the cradle as of yet... so I shall not defile her by making the attempt. And remember... curiosity is the most dangerous adversary you all must face."

I am Pendragon.

Fellania was safely on her way with Anhogamon with Sue and Mady in tow. That was one piece out of harm's way.

As I walked through my shrine, I lifted my staff to the doors, placing my most potent locking Lores upon the doors to keep them sealed and the individuals there in locked within. I did the same to each of my students, locking each room, each door, finishing at last with Lilly's door after checking in on her, finding her curled up into a tight ball in her blankets with her tail over her nose before I sealed the door to her cubby hole before stepping lithely out of my shrine to stand on the grass before the open doors to the shrine. It was deceptively quiet tonight...

The pieces were in place, now to preserve them all.

Minutes abated... and I felt the stirring in the air. They made absolutely no other evidence than that, but a Fairy Dragon's Antennae acted as a sense of smell and a sense of motion through its incredible sense of touch among other supernatural skills and abilities, and no matter how stealthed a body was... it still shifted the air when it moved.

"Before you all attack, I think you should know that I have a legion of warrior monks ready to oppose you." I said aloud.

In answer, a shadow fell almost as if it were falling from the sky after being disgorged out of the black new moon and landed with utmost silence before me, and a hunched figure rolled upward from a crouch, wearing black garb,

the bits of metal on him painted black, his tail even was black, and everything from fur to toe claws were black... save his eyes. Those were red.

“I don’t believe you, Pendragon.” *The creature spat through his mask.*

“Would you believe thirty Panzer Dragons?”

My visitor shook his head.

“Chuck Norris with a bee-bee gun?” *I asked hopefully.*

“As usual, Pendragon, your use of humor is as inappropriate as ever. I’m here to tell you that I am going to assassinate you and everyone in your shrine.”

“You know, Gregore, sometimes humor is a far greater weapon than you can ever imagine.”

Gregore the rat, grandfather of Remy LeBeau, clan master of his own clan in the Under City, the stolen city of the rats, folded his arms and eyed me with his red eyes and raised the brow of one of them even as dozens of rats landed behind him in ways that would make ninja masters seem club-footed.

“I brought an army with me, Pendragon. You may be a venerable dragon that can take one of our blades, but I’d wager you’re still weak from the previous blade... and though you may live through a second, you will doubtless not live through a third.”

“Doubtless. Well I’ll tell you what, Gregore,” *I said and snapped the arms of one side of me out of the wrapping robe and let the sleeve hang off my back before I ground my staff.* “I will take that wager. Humor... against steel. And to up the wager, I won’t move from this... spot.” *And I pointed sharply at the ground in front of me.*

“By all means, Pendragon,” *Gregore chuckled and shook his head.* “I’ll let you make the first move too. Go ahead... use humor to defeat our steel.”

“Very well. But... in the spirit of the venerable Tony Montana... ‘Say Hello... to my little friends.’”

And I gestured around me as hundreds of multicolored eyes suddenly opened up all around me, on trees and on awnings and balconies, on walls and in the grassy lawns, right before the Glamour Cloaking magics of hundreds of fairy dragons dropped to allow the rats to see them. Following the glowing eyes came gleaming needle-sharp teeth, the insane grinning teeth look rivaled only by the Cheshire Cat.

Gregore began to laugh. “This... is your ace in the hole Pendragon. Tiny little Fairy Dragons?”

I smirked as I heard Bob growl as he approached, arms folded before him. “Do you know what the word ‘nemesis’ means?” *he intoned with a raised eyebrow.* “It’s a righteous infliction of retribution, manifested by an appropriate agent... personified in this case by a horrible cunt: ...Me.”

That was a phrase that would bring anyone up short... including Gregore.

“Now then... I see that you brought your sling blade, so let’s go get some French fried po-ta-ters, mm-hmm.” *Bob said in a slow Appalachian-American drawl right before Bob slapped himself against the front of Gregore’s face, yanked Gregore’s mask off, and then kissed him before he could vomit up his poison.* “Wow boy! You sure do got a

purdy mouth! And now I'm gonna violate you in ways only yer daddy did and you blocked out till you were forty. Time to squeal like a pig... Yee haw!" *And Bob immediately began humping Gregore's ear and swinging a cowboy hat like he was riding a bucking bronco.*

"Ah! Get him... off... me!" *Gregore hollered and fought at Bob's... proboscis... from invading him in ways I didn't want to entertain or imagine, but Bob was currently the least of the rat's worries.*

There were few things more frightening than hundreds of fairy dragons launching themselves at you. Thoughts of insect swarms entered your mind that were approaching to devour you, and they used music to punctuate certain emotions... like using the music from 'On Bald Mountain' to really get that flocking sensation of swirling demons in flight on you. There was a brooding at a mix table actually dedicated to that effect. Strange that he was dressed like Moby.

I smirked at the immediate chaos that ensued that usually happened when a straight forward serious group of people like assassins suddenly had to contend with the zany wackiness that only Fairy Dragons could accomplish.

Thirty wedgies later, some on the same person, the rats that were normally so concise in their unity while in combat were already in disarray.

I am Remy.

While I was donning my gear, I was watching out of the corner of my eyes as Sen was doing the same. I knew better to argue with a female when they had their heart set on something. Bless her for wanting to do this, bless her for wanting to defend me to the death.

"I'm ready." *She announced and rose to her feet. Silver body armor, white cloth wrappings... they weren't largely very much in use in the assassin world... normally, not unless you were assassinating in snowy ground.*

She came to me and I embraced her, kissed her and felt her belly, kissing her lips, as she fussed over the ties of my garb. Mine were new... I never wore white and silver into battle before.

"I want you to take care of our child."

"Children." *She mused and I blinked at her. "Twins." She said with much pride and I kissed her again, holding the kiss passionately, and she sucked on the kiss long and hard... till she felt loose in my arms, and then limp before I set her down in the bedding.*

"Ain't that a switch, usually I'm the one that gets the Sleeping Kiss." *I said aloud and quickly wiped the lipstick off my mouth.*

It was a double shot of simple alchemy. One layer covered the lips in a protective sheathe; the next one gets absorbed through the skin of the kissee with a powerful knock out drug. Kind of like a ruffie. I'd wake up, minus a wallet, sometimes clothes and maybe an organ, and then I'd have to wreak justice on the bitch that thought she could steal from me.

Sen nonetheless should be out for at least an hour. One way or another, it'd all be over by then.

Leaning over her and loosening the straps of her armor, I bent to kiss her forehead. "If you're half the mouse I think you are, then I know you can hear me despite that you're unconscious right now. Be angry at me later, my beloved. You've shown me such wonders, such kindness, such love that I'd forever felt that I'd long, long been undeserving of. I will not have you... wasted in such a stupid endeavor between family members, especially when you carry our babies in your womb." I kissed her belly after pushing the hem of her Gi up to reveal her lightly muscled belly. "Know that I love you, and if I live through this... I'll want nothing more than to spend the rest of my life with you."

And leaping to my feet and then running up a wall, I slid through a vent that Pen hadn't sealed off with his fantastic magic.

Gaia's Cradle, also known as Gaia's Womb, was appropriately named.

It was a hole, the perpetual scar in the Earth that had once held the World Tree Gaia. The same World Tree that Thor protected the Rainbow Bridge to against the ancient Dragon Midgar.

Pen said that there was a different observation in that story, a dragon's version and he'd tell it to me when I return... I was glad he didn't use the phrase *'Should I return.'*

Nonetheless, I was profoundly taken in by the site that was before me.

The Cradle was a crater, not a crater delved or created by vulcanology or some meteor, but rather it was the imprinted base that used to hold the roots of the Mother Tree. The terrain radiating in every direction from this place followed the very path of her roots before she was felled, her remains wasting away and her power passing into the world itself, so that Gaia the World Tree instead became Gaia the Planet.

The Ancient Grecians called Gaia the first Titan. It was she who formed the Earth, her broad breasts were its mountains, her inner bowels formed Hades and Tartarus, and from her she created Uranus, the Starry Sky, in whom she laid with to create Chronos, Chronos and his sister Rhea who begat then the Olympian Pantheon.

The Cradle was considered to be the birthplace of all life on the planet Earth, sought after by every race of Dragon, Fae, Elf and Man across every epoch since she fell. This was the ultimate pilgrimage for Druids and Shamans. But therein where The Cradle of Life was the birth place of life... we had to journey literally into the very womb of life to deposit this vase of hatred into the box that laid therein.

As I stood on the precipice of this place with my friend and our men, Anhogamon before us as he gazed downward into the basin, his three-hundred thousand year long quest nearing an end, I understood why it served as the ultimate source of femininity in the world. No wonder it was so guarded. No self respecting female would leave her loins unguarded...

Nevertheless, the sight of this place was breathtaking, ethereal. The light was a perpetual pale green even as we left the light of the fading sun and delved into the mossy slope, moss that was well moistened, with towering trees erecting from the ground. The sight of a gaped open and sexually moistened vulva covered in its own hairs in the form of the trees and its flesh being a velvety moss wasn't lost on me as Sue and I led the way down, sparkling green motes falling from the trees while lazy streamers of pure, unrefined spiritual energy slid lazily down the slopes between the trees in the form of brilliant green will-o-wisps.

But it was half way down that I paused and tensed, panting slowly as spontaneously I began to perspire, while my loins started to trickle with lubricating juices. Damn it... not now!

“Fell?” Sue prompted.

“It pains you.” Anho mentioned, and palmed the small of my back and I nodded, becoming receptive to such... *incredible* feminine energy in this place.

As a Druidess, I was sensitive to the ways of the Earth. I felt sick when near toxic spills, I felt energized in natural scenes of beauty, and here... where womanhood was at its peak in the world, the force of the heat inside me had doubled, driving me near to madness.

Sue came in beside me and helped me stand... we'd all shifted into our altered forms, my loose garb now being tight about me, the pants turned into knee-length shorts, my robes now being short sleeves around my muscles... but I felt the pulsating, beating, throbbing sensation in my loins seeming to feed me with feminine power, and I felt my muscles and breasts heaving thicker and heavier as I absorbed the ambient energy here. True Sue was a woman too, and was perhaps gaining something from this place where women became predominantly stronger than men here, but with my receptiveness to the Earth I was surging, growing, and those tight clothes became even tighter till the seat of the pants slid between butt cheeks and the crotch gave my pussy a wedgie. Seams of my clothes were groaning and the inner disks of areola were appearing from out of my robes as my chest, back and breasts steadily expanded.

I felt such strength approaching me and I tried to breath slowly, tried to calm myself. I feared to look at Anho at that moment, for if I did then I would assuredly jump his bones and then we'd all be screwed.

I felt a tingling in my loins and breasts, my mind numbing slightly before I straightened and turned to Sue with a strained half smile...

“What pains me?” I managed through grinning teeth that were more like grit teeth.

But then Madoushi arrived, pulling something from a satchel and shoved it into my nose, and I instinctively gripped it and inhaled its scent, feeling my mind clear a little at least.

“Come off it, Fell... we all know what you're experiencing right now.” Sue mentioned as they gathered about me.

“You're just like her.” Anho said suddenly and I lowered my hand with the herbs and stood there, hearing his voice but not wanting to look at him still. I feared what might happen if I did. “She wasn't able to admit weakness either...” Anho mentioned and I felt his hand slide from my back to my belly. “You've been battling it for weeks, I know... I can smell it on you.”

“I... can't do anything about that right now.” I sighed, but nonetheless gripped his hand fiercely. “We... need to continue.” And I forced myself to break contact with Anho and Sue.

“No... you can't.” Anhogamon said quietly, and there was something in his voice that I didn't quite get. “Come on then, show us the way.”

“W-why me?” I breathed as the air seemed to feel hotter, thicker, moister... It was like the stink of sex.

“Because I can hardly see you let alone my own footsteps.” Anho said suddenly.

“Nor I.” Mad agreed. “It’s as thick as split pea soup here.”

“What?” Sue and I both asked simultaneously before we both looked back toward the opened well of swirling spiritual energy pouring into and spewing out of the hole at the base of the basin. “You mean you can’t see anything?”

“The fog is particularly thick.” Mady mentioned. “I can’t see past it, but you seem to be picking your way through this place without any effort.”

“Yea verily.” Anho nodded.

“Source of femininity. You can’t see because... you’re a guy.” I blinked.

“A guy?” Anho blinked in confusion to the word.

“Oh... it’s slang for male.” I beamed quickly. “Here... take my hand.” I said without thinking and he took it, but feeling his small yet masculinely powerful hand slide into mine made me shiver.

The connection was electric, there was a soul surging joining there, it was immaculate, pure. I wanted more of it, I wanted to snatch him to my bosom and let him suck from my nipples and... I shook my head and adjusted my fingers. “Sue... show Mady the way. Let’s just go and get this done with. Walk where I walk.” I said breathlessly and led the way around the trees and precipices of rock formations.

The land here churned as if alive, and more than once we came across the remains of some animal or person, German SS officers impaled on rock, Roman legionnaires mangled by trees. The Cradle was a feminine place... no man may tread here unless guided by a woman, and since women were regarded less than men for most of humanity’s existence, no man entered this place till now with a woman to guide them. Thousands must’ve perished here because of that arrogance, and in that arrogance to take the Cradle for themselves, the Cradle punished them viciously with their lives for daring to delve into its depths.

Gaia did protect her gates, and in all my life... I’ve never felt so privileged to be a woman. In a world where privilege was always man-man-man, where the rough edges of the world had to often times be held up by women, this was truly the first time that I could remember where it was all me baby.

Even Anhogamon, in his venerable skill was brought down in this place, rendered all but blind, deaf and dumb by the mists. Even Madoushi who always saw the truth in all things still had to be led by the blinding effects a male saw in this basin.

But the further down into the basin we all went the more two things happened.

The first and foremost was that the pressure on me, in my breasts and in my loins became all the more poignant, I perspired heavily ... the cloud of pheromones rising up from me was thankfully masked by the scents coming from the basin field. My muscles were throbbing, my body quivering for want of sex, my pussy sopping wet as my chest slid first one tit and then the other out into the open, the coat that once covered me now nothing more than a vest on the outsides of my voluminous chest that was so engorged with milk that the fur over the breasts had thinned to a velvety feeling soft flesh.

The natural was so grand here that even though it was night time now, there was light being *generated* by the misty fog here and the little firefly like green motes dancing in the air like radiation particles.

The second thing that I felt was in relation to just how intense the mere touch of Anhogamon's hand in mine was. I felt a deeper and deeper connection with him, as if chain links were being formed two a time between us to bind us, one in him and one in me, up the arms and deeper and deeper into the body.

Both sensations had grown to make me feel like I was just a few moments before climax by the time we stood at the precipice of the basin's base, in which streamers of light from the spirits rising and falling, with this point lit in the opening in a multitude of colors.

"I can see again." Anho mentioned and then looked back. "How did you ever get us through that fog?"

"The fog isn't so thick for me." I breathed deeply, panting even as I spoke almost in a sigh. Sensuality and growing eroticism were making me light-headed. "Do we go down?"

"Yes." Anho replied. "Pendragon instructed me earlier that the chamber is below. The route twists but is quite direct." He told me, and with a nod we both leapt into the hole followed by Sue and Mady, and we fell about a few dozen feet or so before reaching the base.

Here, the ground, still moss and vine-covered, led downward in a broad curving arch deep... deep into the earth. The smell of natural air was even thicker here, and sure enough, the sensations sliding through me were even more potent than up in the basin.

I felt a tug on my hand as Anhogamon started forward but then he stopped and looked back at me before tugging me to him. I mindlessly stepped forward to be closer to that rosy little cat. "Belie it for me to ignore wisdom, Fellania. I am in a realm I do not understand... please show me the way."

"Fell... are you ok?" Sue prompted as we started forward.

"I'm... a bit light-headed." I sighed with a stupid smile on my face.

"Maybe I should lead." Sue added, and taking Mady by the hand she led the way down and Anho, a concerned look for me, dragged me along behind him.

I nodded dumbly and stepped forward, putting one foot in front of the other with Anho still holding my hand, I felt like I was swooning slowly as we walked deep into the Mother Earth, entering toward her womb, and I felt my innards churning with every step. As we journeyed downward, his and my fingers laced with each other. The linked chains inside us now attached my heart to his and it was like we were beating in sequence. I was amazed at how powerful his heart was. So strong, so stalwart, so direct. This was a person who held all his strength on the inside. He wasn't tall, he wasn't hyper-muscular or hyper-endowed, he was a little fireplug... a solid lump of iron tempered into a chorded statue of steel girders wrapped with bridge cable and piano wire wrapped in taut flesh and gray fur... all around a heart of pure gold.

For awhile there I wasn't sure who was doing the leading, him or me, but as we descended, the heat just kept growing, becoming like a sauna, and at first I thought it was just me, but soon I saw the crackelature in the walls showing flowing veins of what looked like lava. I wasn't sure what was keeping it all in the cracked tubing in the walls, but the magma flowed... like veins.

I think it singed my fur.

But finally at the very base of the curving column of life that gave way to the heart blood of the Earth, we entered into a chamber in which the ceiling was so high moisture collected into clouds amidst a multi-colored moss ceiling that combined with crystal growths that glowed, gave off a shining radiance similar to a noon-day sky.

Beneath it was a garden of sorts, lush with creeping trailers and plants, and between all the plants was a small lake of some water that glittered like blackened silver. A narrow walkway led to a dais of sorts that was in the center of the water, the dais bordered with tall columns and capped with a stone cap like something out of a Greek painting.

On the center of the dais was a marble column, and atop the column was a box, an ornate chest that stood with its gilded lid opened.

“There.” Anhogamon breathed, and I could feel the excitement in him, the end of his quest in sight now.

There was the goal he’d sought for so long, nearly within arm’s reach. I imagined he and I walking up to it, me breaking the seal on the jar and pouring its contents into the box and then we could just go home. Anhogamon’s quest would be over! All would be well, all would be grand.

But as Anho started forward I held him back.

“Fellania...” Anho began but stopped upon the look on my face.

“Something’s wrong.” I replied and Sue lifted her chin, her nostrils flaring as there was actually a flow of wind in this chamber that disturbed the stray locks of her mane.

“This is too easy. Nothing so dangerous and so precious is just sitting out like that.” Sue commented.

Anhogamon, perhaps blinded by his eagerness to end his quest looked again, and slowly stepped back, and gripping his sword he thumbed the pommel forward slightly to clear the friction of the blade’s base leaving the sheathe of his sword.

And then up from the box rose a crystal.

“Get ready!” Anho shouted as the Crystal spun and then seemed to flick itself from where it hovered over the box to just before the narrow ramp leading to the dais, there it hung and then spun, resonating as it burned an angry red, right before there was a pulse from it, and the outline of a towering man appeared before plates of crystalline armor, a great disk for a crystal shield, and a crystal sword erected out of his hand.

This being banged on his shield three times, the sound strumming the air like someone banging on a crystal goblet to get the attention of a group of diners at a dinner party.

“NONE SHALL PASS!” it bellowed.

“What the hell?” Sue gasped. “Is this Monty Python’s Search for the Holy Grail here take two? You going to bite my legs off?”

“Dearest... please... don’t give it any ideas.” Mady said and lifted his hands.

For the first time since entering the Cradle, Anho and I broke hands... I was glad that the links between us remained unbroken even despite that physical contact had been broken... weakened but not broken, and skipping forward and bringing White Oak up into a combat stance as Sue pulled a sort of two-woman Charlie's Angels next to me, I snarled at the guardian as my staff burned with ethereal light.

My powers were a thousand fold here, my sexual strengths and powers swelling in me till the clothes on me were tugging into the creases of my body, tight and hard with my naked breasts wobbling out into the open, with arms and legs and chest broadening slowly along with the steady swell of breasts and sex. It wasn't phenomenal ridiculous growth, it had been slow, almost unnoticed by me as it progressed I absorbed the natural might of the earth here that was so keyed to femininity. My pussy throbbed in tune with it and my nipples quivered as they engorged at the same time with it while a slick of milk moistened my breasts. Ties that held the bodice of my clothing shut snapped open about my muscular waist, spreading the torso clothing apart for the burgeoning power of femininity that I was absorbing, and the bothersome heat in me only strengthened it!

I was doing it! I was entering heat madness... but not the sort of madness that would lead me to force myself on Anho... or – heaven forbid – Mady, it nonetheless became a steeling strength that empowered me even further.

But then, Anhogamon was leaping before me, and Sue and I blinked for a moment in confusion at this. I mean we got it... really Anho... we could handle this... but to see him leaping to our rescue nevertheless, I realized that this was his quest, his task, and despite that Sue and I were empowered here because we were women, and he and Mady were reduced because they were men, Anho nonetheless took the fore.

He drew his sword, and though I towered above him, outweighed him by several kilos and have imbued magics and a staff of power at my disposal, he uttered only "Get behind me!"

I stared at him in disbelief, but then my disbelief turned to admiration as he sets his stance, his armor renewed with the spirit of his will as he leveled his gaze at the guardian...

"I will... defeat you!"

This wasn't flippant bravado... or the machismo of a younger virulent man, but rather this is the skilled promise of a Samurai, honed in the forgotten ways of Bushido that were older than mankind itself... this was a promise he would keep to the Guardian even if they both stood teetering at the gates of hell itself.

I am Pendragon.

I stood out in the open within the single shaft of light coming from the main hall of my shrine. My hand gripped my staff, standing my ground as promised while the battle ensued before me. I had to abide the time. Time was a clock, everything had its place and execution, the game was chess, but it was a game across four dimensions against multiple simultaneous opponents. Some opponents are defeated and they leave the game while new ones entered it, and my current opponent was at this time Gregore.

Bob was rather determined... having been pent up in his adolescent need to well... 'fuck with people' as our genetics dictate, he was making sure that he was getting it all out. But then again... so was I.

Three rats landed around me, one directly in front of me to engage me.

“Say your prayers you old Wyrml!” the one in front said.

“I gotta better idea... how ‘bout you play with my pet.” And I reached into a dimensional pocket – all fairy dragons have one or more of them – and pulled out a little creature that I carried with me and cared for since he was a kitten. Sure he was kept placated by being stoned on a mixture of herbs, but then again Displacer Beasts were like Dobermans in that regards. They were dangerous because of their upbringing.

So when you’re a Wererat and a Fairy Dragon pulls out a large creature with six legs and four tentacles smoking a doobie and you reach up and lightly flick that doobie out of his mouth and state “Sick ‘em.” What do you do? Especially when that doobie is figuratively that Displacer Beast’s woobie... the beast goes... oh what was the term? Oh yes... ‘Psycho Hose Beast’ on you.

Displacer beasts had two interesting little traits, the first being the fact that they blinked and after blinking their actual physical location was displaced. Orientation of the beast in which way it was facing and how far away it was facing was randomized every time it blinks... so you never knew where it really was. The other was its stunning, grasping tentacles.

Oh he was a terror, but I just called him ‘Binkie.’ He was perfectly peaceful so long as he had his woobie. If he didn’t have his woobie...

Binkie was apt at chasing away the three rats but apparently I had become the prime target at the moment. They believed that all would fall when I died. Foolish... foolish rats. They’d have to kill me first to find out what happened after I was dead... if they could kill me. But the next thing a fairy dragon was known for was the S-class maneuverability that was enjoyed by so few other species in existence. Essentially we could make instant one-hundred-and-eighty degree turns without slowing down while in flight, and our reflexes bordered on the precognitive level even as hatchlings, so when a Ender Wyrml such as myself, who actually did have precognition, their knife swipes slid through completely empty air, while they seemed to just fall into my staff.

I’ll have to say too, that there’s nothing more satisfying than being a tiny little runt who kicks individuals much larger than him in their proverbial asses. But Rat stealth in the more advanced individuals allowed them to delay precognition. Not quite the effect of a Wild Card as Fate was concerned, but in battle a fraction of a second could mean all the difference between the quick and the dead.

Gregore was one of those individuals stealthy enough to actually do that little trick, and luckily he’d tipped his hand in showing me that he was capable of that when last he stabbed me. So I watched for the feint, I watched for the distraction, but as unpredictable as I and my kind were, Gregore had trained himself well, and his unpredictability was to walk straight up to me from out of the cloud of battering broodling taunts and jeers, remove his mask, lick his blade, and stand before me with that knife glistening a sickly, glowing green.

“So... we meet again for the first time for the last time...” I told him and Gregore narrowed his eyes in confusion.

“What?” he shook his head. “It doesn’t matter... prepare to die, Pendragon.”

He raised his knife and I held up a pausing hand. “Before you kill me, Gregore... I want to know... why?”

“Simple. You took my grandson from me.”

“You accepted payment, which makes you a cheat. So much for a rat’s vaunted honor. Trying to murder me and regain your grandson?”

“Money isn’t what this is about Pendragon. You took him from me, you changed him. He’s no longer the Rat I made, he’s been corrupted by your... ways.”

“Kindness and feeling, love and affection, perseverance and preservation? You regard these traits as dark and sinister, unworthy of your grandson? So you’d just kill him and everyone he’s come to know and love here?”

“Yes. It is not the Rat way.”

“Correction... it’s not your way. I have farts contained in jars that are older than you, Gregore, don’t be so foolish as to think that you can fool me into your way of thinking. You are a crass, overbearing, demeaning bastard who murdered your own son and tried to murder his wife.”

“Tried to. I did indeed kill my own son, tried to do the same to his damnable whore of a wife, unsuccessfully. That bitch corrupted my son, and though I don’t know where that whore is... I *will* find her eventually. Her damnable ways were what ultimately destroyed my heir. No matter... I have many students, I will just make one of them my heir... and they are far more promising than Remy ever was.”

“Doubtful. You obviously have no concept about the true power of your own grandson. Well strike away if you can, Gregore. And to make matters more challenging for you, I won’t even move a muscle.”

“Foolish until the end.” *Gregore said and lifted his poisoned blade again. He swung, there was a crunch and a squelch of broken flesh and escaping life fluids, and the poisoned blade rammed straight and true, right into the heart.*

I was at the ready, I had my staff out in the open, side-stepping in the background, but the more I watched, the more I became amazed, enthralled and awed at the true might of the Ronin Anhogamon. The art of the Bushido as it was before the art was called Bushido as it was displayed in the Seven Samurai, The Last Samurai and so on, paled in comparison to the true and ancient art wielded by this short yet nimble little cat-man.

His strikes radiated with lightning and thunder, they cracked and thundered with every swinging blow of his main hand, while his off-hand, the short little Wakizashi, danced as nimbly as an assassin’s blade. Sword techniques that used even the flat of the blade to shatter parts of his opponents crystalline armor and sword exploded with angry red-orange lightning through its body, the quick slashes and strikes of the smaller knife quickly cutting and piercing in between chinks with the precision of backstabs only to be followed up by the insane power of that main hand bludgeoning his opponent down.

Anhogamon was surrounded by *‘The Glow’*, the radiant might of his chi being unmitigated levels beyond any known Chi-Magic user. Impossible somersaulting and cart wheeling attacks allowed Anhogamon to dance out of the way of this guardian’s insanely swift blade while at the same time skip up and down the guardian’s body to slash and attack the creature.

“Shouldn’t we do something to help?” Madoushi asked, hands raised to cast his strange Dreamtime spells.

He and Sue looked questioningly at me as I lowered my staff and just stood there. “Never underestimate the potential of a person with a low center of gravity.” I said aloud then. “No... no to interfere would be to dishonor him now.”

I wanted to shout out *'Let me help you! Let's do this together!'* but I couldn't. Stunned with the ferocity of that little bobcat, the expertise and prowess, especially given his earlier oath, I felt that it would lessen him if I interfered... it would be a strike on his honor.

But layer by layer, piece by piece, Anho destroyed the guardian's defenses, and leaping upward onto its waist armor, balancing with one foot, his sword arched upward along the body, electrifying it with angry red lightning through its flesh as the blade cut, balanced on its tip, and then plunged inward. Expertly the blade pierced the crystal inside the spiritual guardian's form, cracking and splitting it in two before Anho leapt off it, right as it exploded within a series of shrapnel-like shards.

This time it was my turn to save him, and I quickly put my back to the explosion and was peppered with a plethora of shards, some cilia thin, that shattered against my broad back as I clenched it, my legs and ass cheeks, creating a barrier of hardened muscle stronger than any steel. Sure... my clothes were cut all to hell, but my body resisted the damage quite easily.

When it was over, I opened my supremely muscular arms, only to see that I'd embraced him, my breasts cleaving to his sides with his face buried in my cleavage.

"Oh... sorry..." I blushed, but then felt a couple of things that might've been awkward, but at the moment...

Anho started purring, gripping his sword with one hand before he massaged the base and front of my tit with the other, laying a kiss upon the fattened milk gland. He didn't touch the nipple, but his fingers skirted the edge of the areola all right. He licked my flesh with his tongue comb and rubbed his cheek against it to plant his pheromones there, his nostrils having been so intensely filled with my pheromones, when he came up his pupils were wide as they could ever be briefly as he looked up at me with a stupid smile. But then blinking, the third eyelids slid over and back before those eyes before the pupils pinched immediately, he extricated himself from my cleavage and stood up. This put his package more before my face.

I gazed at it.

"F-forgive me... I was... incensed by your... scent."

"S'ok. I feel the same." I almost moaned and rose to my feet. This put my loins more in his eye's view.

He gazed upon me and took a deep breath... till Sue began giggling.

"Do you two need a room?" she laughed and I shot her a withering glare to stay out of it.

"No... but we need to complete this mission... once and for all." Anho mentioned and sheathed his sword and Wakizashi with his usually flawless flourish.

All of us together, we traipsed across the narrow ramp to the dais, and standing together he handed me the jar, and holding it over the box, which was filled with the same strange blackened silvery water, I cracked the seal to the pot.

Gregore gaped as he saw the arm jutting out of the shaft of light just above his head, the arm cut off right at the explicit angle that the shaft of light slid from the shrine. He gasped, arms falling limp as he looked at the blade in

his heart as his flesh bubbled around it, hissed and popped from the virulent poison on the blade, its coating filtering immediately through the whole of his body from having been injected immediately into his heart.

“W-what trickery... is this?” Gregore gasped. “How am I defeated?”

“Check and mate.” I replied, even as the white garbed figure slid from the light into the darkness, twisting the blade slowly so that Gregore felt it. “Allow me to introduce your grandson, Gregore. And thank you for admitting that you wronged him in the worst way imaginable. He always believed you’d killed his father, but bless the boy... he loves his mother, and I dare say an arrogant asshole like you has perhaps never considered that there’s nothing more potent than a lone brave man protecting his family... especially his mother.”

Remy pulled the dagger from his grandfather’s chest and the bastard collapsed forward into his grandson.

“A v-valiant... effort.” He laughed and coughed up green slicked blood that was blackening as it burned from the poison in his system. “Y-you’ve... outdone your old man, and me.” Gregore laughed. “Then listen carefully boy. This is my last lesson to you.”

“I’ll listen to nothing ye say, ye fucking twisted bastard.” Remy bit out, his accent returning in spades like it did whenever he was extremely upset.

“Oh... But you have no choice.” He coughed and laughed as more blood drained from his mouth.

My eyes widened as the precognition hit me, but like I mentioned, anything involving Gregore was delayed.

“Remy! Look...” and there was a dull thud, and Gregore buried his blade to the hilt in Remy’s side. “...out.” I groaned.

“Heh-heh. An enemy is still dangerous... so long as they are still alive.” Gregore said and he rose up on tip-toe to whisper into Remy’s ear. “I still win.”

Angry red mist burst from the jar the moment the seal was broken. The jar itself shattered in my hand and the mists swirled and churned around us, snarling and laughing insanely, as hundreds of snarling faces of demons and warlords cut at us with their might. Pieces of our clothing were cut, Anho trying to slash against the anger and hatred that in particular attacked him for shutting it up for so long in a jar.

“Now do we fight?” Madoushi asked over the sound of a maelstrom as the bits of evil anger picked up shards of crystal to be used as knives.

“Yes!!” Sue, Anho and me shouted back as I jabbed at an angry mote and it screamed in pain but didn’t dissipate, it merely withdrew but continued its malevolent swirl to try and kill us.

“Why isn’t it going into the box?!” I cried as the angry red lights actually pierced and cut me painfully, the wounds burning like acid.

“I don’t know!” Anhogamon shouted back and then yowled as he got a nasty cut across his face. “The Empress told me it should just go into the box!”

“Three hundred thousand years have passed!” Mady shouted and a burst from his hands scattered several of the lights. “It’s grown stronger since then! AH! Festered!” and I got cut hard across the chest, right across both bosoms.

I stamped White Oak in an attempt to make a shield, and the feminine spiritual power blossomed from the staff to shield us while the anger swirled around us, cutting at the shield and causing cracks immediately despite the incredible might I now wielded here in the very womb of the world. My mind raced, my brain throbbing from fear and erotic sensation both, and biting my lower lip with effort to sustain the spell, there was very little brainpower left to hold all that back, but nonetheless, some synapse fired, creating a thought no larger than a mote... almost as if I were inspired by it, and when I heard it, I gasped with realization.

What defeated hatred and anger? The answer was simple: Love and affection.

“Anho... kiss me!”

“What?!” he gaped and whirled on me. “Now?” I admit, with Sue’s chi blasts and Mady’s Dreamtime... whatever that was, they both eyed me like I was mad!

“I said... kiss me!” and I lowered to one knee beside him as I hooked him with an arm and pulled him deep into my cleavage. “And make it count...dearest heart.” I whispered and then half closing my eyes and puckering a little...

Anho looked about to Sue and Mad, and then at me, and perhaps it was desperation, but I thought it was his trust in me, he said: “Ah Hells,” and surged in between my cleavage, and pressed his lips against mine.

In the Cradle, passion had power, and in that one, immediate embrace, something exploded from us, and from the box... something that had been there for ages and never fully released but was now drawn out with the force of our love, rose from the box and attacked the hatred and anger with its ethereal pure white light.

“It’s working!” Sue shouted.

That force, strengthened by the passion Anhogamon and I were producing had a single, solitary and utterly powerful name to it.

It was: *‘Hope.’*

Remy’s hands flashed, little daggers ejected from under his palms and he slapped his palms against Gregore’s body repeatedly, and the little daggers made incisions deep enough to cut arteries. Gregore fell backward and his blood seeped from multiple openings out onto the ground. Gregore gurgled and quivered, and Remy sagged before yanking the blade from between his second and third ribs.

That was the heart-blow. Striking there was a death penalty for most, and that knife had been coated with poison from an extremely talented wererat... a very old wererat who was old enough to be a grandfather amidst a race that usually didn’t live past the age of twenty-nine. Remy reached for it, and biting his lower lip, yanked it out.

The other rats and fairy dragons had stopped fighting, a few rats decorating my trees from being hung there by their underwear with still others attached in various positions against the walls with fairy dragon spit, and the daylight

was approaching to turn the horizon into the faint blue that it was now. Ever so slowly, Remy got to his feet, the plume of red on his side slowing thanks to body control.

“He... he was struck by Master Gregore’s dagger. How is he still alive?!” one rat mentioned as he pulled his face and head wrappings off in awe.

“Grandfather... made the mistake... of underestimating me.” Remy mentioned as he drew himself up, breathing more and more deeply. Great maker, he’s recovering! From Gregore’s knife?! “That which doesn’t kill me only makes me stronger. The clan is broken; I renounce my place as its heir.” Remy swallowed repeatedly. “The... current leadership... now rules in my stead. Everyone in the clan’s command now just takes one step sideways.” He chuckled solemnly and slumped a bit before shaking himself and then straightened again. “Now off with you... but leave him.” And he pointed at his grandfather. “I keep what I kill.”

Like cutting off the head of the snake... the beast dies. But this was like a Ninja clan. It was a cell of assassins. Kill the head of one and someone else was ready to take his place. But with the head gone, the contract was over. There was no reason to kill a person, and it was against their code to kill for no reason... so they all turned and left.

“That’s right! Keep walking hero! Don’t even turn around!” a brooding squeaked after them, only to squeal as a dagger buried itself in the ground directly before where she was standing.

“Remy...” I prompted immediately and he waved me off.

“I’m fine.” He replied, but nonetheless covered his wound with one hand as he looked down at his grandfather. “I want him burned. A funeral Pyre.”

“Isn’t that sort of thing reserved for heroes?” I asked and gripped his elbow to steady him.

“To a degree. He was family, Pen. He’ll die and be buried like family... but there’s no way in hell I’m going to let him rest in my family’s tomb.”

Remy and I exchanged a grin... till I heard a: “Wryyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyy!” scream. Though comical, the emotion in the scream was anything but comical.

It didn’t take us long to find out the cause as Bob, surrounded by his wounded children, cradled one of his many sons... a little blue that was wearing glasses that had been taped onto his head. The pang that I felt as Bob looked up at me stabbed me in the heart.

“Are you happy?! Are you damned happy?!”

“Do you expect me to be?” I asked him and he closed his eyes and nudged his son’s head with his, still crying. I knelt down before him and palmed his shoulder but he shrugged it off.

“Don’t touch me.”

I gripped his chin and jerked it up so that he looked at me.

“Let this be a lesson to you. If I were still under your damned curse... I wouldn’t have been prepared for this.” And from my robes I removed a vial, uncorked the stopper... but the potion I was about to use paused as I... felt a disturbance in the air, and turning suddenly I gaped at Lilly standing before me.

How she got out of her locked door... either she was stronger than even my lores now... or she had another way out. But then again I kept wondering how she kept sneaking stuff into her room without my notice.

Lilly bent and took the little blue dragonling before any of us could do anything about it, and balling the little guy up in both hands, she fit her lips to her palms... and blew.

I was taken aback as a glow immediately shone through her fingers, the shining brilliance immediately blinding as she held the blowing effect for a long time, and after many tenuous moments... she stopped blowing and the glow faded before she opened her hands slowly.

And in her palms, sittign up groggily and dizzily, the little blue dragonling adjusted his glasses and shook his head to make a comical bat-ear flapping sound.

"I fell asleep somehow." He groaned and then coughed. "Did we win?!"

"Yes we did." I blinked in utter supply as Bob rose beside me, took the potion from my hand and drank it absentmindedly, looked at it and then threw it on the ground when it wasn't alcohol before holding his hands out for his boy, and the broodling stepped off Lilly's hands to flutter to the ground.

"Did I... die?" the broodling asked then.

"Nearly... Mew." Lilly said and I smirked. "But nearly dead is slightly alive. Nya!"

The fairy dragon blinked up at Lilly. "What would you do if I were all dead?"

"That's simple!" Bob said with glee, holding back his tears as a joyous father. "We'd go through your scales and look for loose change." I smirked and several of the broodlings chortled, but then I felt a tug and Bob pulled me down to him with a yank. "You... knew that'd happen! Why did you do that?! Why didn't you tell me?!"

"Well... yes... I did know that it'd happen... but not that Lilly would be the one to revive him." I looked at him with a raised eyebrow. "You saw. You know why. Now you understand exactly what I go through when sacrifices are made, Bob. Don't you dare try to deny that and make yourself into a hypocrite now, but mind this... if I hadn't seen, if I hadn't been prepared... what then would've been the toll?" and I gestured over the lot of his brood.

Bob eyed me, and then opening up a side of his scales like it were a vest, he removed a cigarette case and from within it removed a hand-rolled cigarette, put it in his mouth, replaced the cigarette case, flicked his fingers to light his cigarette off a flame generated on his thumb before shaking it out and taking several deep puffs.

Now... Fairy Dragons are able to 'create' a rather... potent... intoxicant called spice. I won't spoil the details on how we make it, but consider this like how dogs... redigest their food. Nonetheless Bob's hands shook as he rubbed the four of them together and his wings and antennae twitched irritably before he smoothed mane, ears horns and antennae backward against his head and shook his arms out.

"Ok... first off... Fuck you," and he jabbed a hand in my direction and I smirked. "Fuck you!" and he jabbed a hand at Remy and he blinked. "Not you you're cool..." he said toward lilly, and then back to me. "And of course fuck you twice.

“Second of all... it’s way past all of your bed times, so get to bed right now or spankings for everyone.” *Bob managed and all his brood collectively went:*

“Aww... but it’s almost morning. Can’t we stay up and watch cartoons? It’s a Saturday!”

“No. Sleep first cartoons later. Off to bed.”

“Aww...” *the lot of them said and took off into the air, floating away before a rat ninja fell from a tree half naked and ran off before the broodlings could do anything more to him.*

Bob flicked the ashes of his cigarette off in one hand while Binkie returned to me with his Woobie slowly smoking in his mouth. Gripping the beast I stuffed him in my pocket again. Bob sniffed the ashes up and snorted before replacing the cigarette in his mouth while his hands still shook.

“All right... I get it now. No more lessons like that or I’ll find some way to kick your ass.” *Bob mentioned as he began to waddle off.*

“The lessons don’t stop, Bob.” *I said and he came to a dead stop. “The problem is... I’m not the one teaching them. I’m just as much of a prey for this teacher as you are... I’ve only learned to play their game better.”*

Bob turned to me and actually let some ashes fall to the ground.

“So what do we do?” *he asked.*

I thought about it and then shrugged. “I don’t know... it’s a mystery.”

I tilted my head back and felt his teeth on my neck, biting down onto my throat lightly with his tongue lapping up the blood. I moaned and cupped the fronts of my breasts as their teats hardened till they ached, and I bit my lower lip as I felt a blush assail me right down into those firm orbs as his hands slid around the pair, parting the front-facing folds of my robes more to reveal more and more of my hyper-muscular belly and its rolling abs. My legs were spread by those same hands as my body immediately readied itself for my long sought after day of love making with a man ...

“It’s not enough!” Sue said even as my shield I was maintaining started to break more.

I arched backward at a strange crossroads here as I panted, breathing in my Anho’s scent as he was positioned between my mighty cleavage. On the one side I was frightened... on the other side I was so in love right now, and dragging my face from his I turned to my friend and her man.

“Kiss! Love!” I told her. “Think about your baby! Think about how much you want it to be Mad’s and not Lee’s! Put all your passion into it!!”

Sue nodded, and Mady and she edged toward each other as they forced the red swirling mists back, and once their arms had laced to hold each other’s back, the two of them slid into a passionate embrace that literally exploded light from the box, and when Anho palmed my face to his so he could kiss me again, a second explosion ignited above us all, erupting, billowing like the Ark of the Covenant exploding in that Raiders movie.

A pillar of white force erupted upward from the box into a mighty tree that filled the cavern, its branches like a willow filing downward to grip the red motes as they screamed in fear and pain, dropping their crystal shards into the strange waters. Sue's breasts were unbound as I fell onto my back, feeling my Anho positioned above me, now rubbing my tit with one hand and caressing my face with the other... and I wet myself hard, my pants now completely moistened through with ejaculate and sweat. I needed him, I hoped for a daughter, I hoped for eternal love, and I hoped and I hoped...

"Oh God!" I moaned and orgasmed, and immediately the billowing tree twisted and swirled and sped downward like a tornado of brilliant white and red lights, swirling into the box before the lid slammed shut on top of it with an echoing sound that made the water around the dais ripple from the impact.

And then all was quiet. For the moment.

And then the box began to rattle, it began to churn, and rising just enough with a beam of light around it, the light exploded from the box and hope billowed downward from the box, across the waters and then shot off down the tunnel we'd come down to release itself onto the world.

Hatred contained... Hope released...

With a second slam, the lid of Pandora's Box shut itself with a deep crashing resonance, leaving Anho and me and Sue and Mady all alone in the utter silence that was left over.

"It's... it's over." Anho said, and before Fell could stop him he rose and surged to the box, testing it's lid that had no lock and no key, but nevertheless the lid was shut tight! Shut... tight... He chortled, he laughed, and then laughed louder and collapsed against the lid of the box, hammering at it with his fist. He was actually crying. "The Creator damn you, you stupid box! It's over!"

I kept staring at that box, licking my lips while Fell turned, her breasts loosened from the opened clothing from our making out with our men and her... strangely steadily growing body in this place – why wasn't I growing that much – jostled and wobbled heavily with the milk in them that likewise leaked from her naked and engorged teats. They'd become so fat and so full that the fur had thinned almost to bare flesh now... one could hardly see the fur in them, and thick milk veins throbbled toward the erect teats. My thighs pressed together tightly as I sat there on my ankles, watching Anho pound the chest with a fist before he turned to us, but I kept staring at the box.

What secrets were contained inside that box? It was the mother of all mystery boxes!

CURIOSITY!

"I'm free Fellania." Anho exclaimed, showing the most emotion ever since I met the guy. "Finally free! Free!" and he laughed again, looking toward the heavens as actual full-bodied tears escaped his eyes. "Free..." he choked.

Fell slid forward and pressing herself against his chest as I stood, swallowing as I looked at the box, feeling a tug from inside my womb drawing me toward it, and I stood, tremulously for a moment wanting to touch the box... open it.

Fell's chest cleaved to his hips and thighs as the two of them embraced despite all his armor that had become battle worn from his fight with the guardian and our fight with the hate wisps. I eyed them for a moment and then returned

my attention back to the box, and taking a step forward, I palmed my belly and approached the fabled box of my daughter Pandora.

“Sue?” *Madoushi mentioned as I stepped onto the rocks, I only glanced at him and took another step. “Sue... what are you doing?”*

“The box is so pretty...” *I mentioned. “And what sorts of secrets it must have in it.” I mewed lazily, caressing the front of one of my primaries, spreading my clothes as a sort of sexual tension approached me, my own teats erecting on all twelve breasts, and I approached the box.*

“Susan!” *Fellania shouted by I ignored her, looking dreamily at the box.*

“It’s so wonderful! So many secrets! So many hidden things! I just wanna peak... I just want to...” *My voice trailed off as I licked my lips and teeth, reach out toward the box and was about to touch it when something struck the box and bounded back, and I squealed in glee at the large ball of string and I bent immediately to snatch it up and chew on it. “String!” I snorted with glee and gnawed on it happily, noming it.*

And then the string yanked right out of my mouth and I turned after it, seeing it land in Fell’s mouth as Mad, with the other end of it, twisted and shook the end of it. Scampering with glee after the string I leapt up onto Mad’s shoulder and he groaned and fell backward from the weight as I nabbed the string... right before Fell nabbed my ear and held it tightly.

“WHAT WERE YOU DOING?!” *she shrieked with incredulous rage.*

“What? I just wanted to look into the box...” *I whined and she stuffed the string in my mouth.*

“You...” *she pointed at me with both hands. “Box...” she pointed at the box. “Tried to open.... Why?!”*

“I was just curious and I... I... what the fuck did I just try to do?!” *I moaned. “But it’s so pretty... let me just peak... NO!”*

“It’s a damn good thing that Mad had that ball of string with him and... wait... why do you have a ball of string with you?” *Fell asked.*

“Pen gave it to me.” *Madoushi said, his voice muffled from underneath my butt. Apparently he was enjoying a face-full of sex... why not... he enjoyed it often enough. Tee-hee. “He said that I should use it if someone tried to open the box. I thought he was insane at the time but...”*

I spit out the ball and looked at it. The string was flat and made of fine knotted strands in which runes that glowed hypnotically laid upon both sides of the woven strands.

“He is insane.” *Fell mentioned and placed her hands on her hips before I placed the string back in my mouth and chewed on it. “And deceptively perceptive. Sue carries Pandora in her womb. Should she touch the box...”*

I stopped chewing for a moment, and just cradled my belly. Oh man... I would’ve opened the box!

“Pandora herself? How’s that possible?”

“It’s a long story.” *Mad’s muffled voice came back.*

Anho exhaled a long sigh. "Let's... let's just get out of here." Anho voiced, and taking Fell's hand, he tugged her along.

"Sue... let Mady up... You're going to suffocate the poor boy."

"I don't mind... really." *Mad mentioned with a thumbs-up sign.*

"Let's... just get the hell out of here before some other baleful thing happens."

And sure enough, I got up, hiked Mady up over my shoulder, and continued on chewing on the string ball.

I am Fellania.

I followed my Anho now walking with White Oak in one hand while we strode across the narrow ramp, up the mossy ground, and with every step I felt myself seeming to unfold inside as my man and I followed Sue gnawing on her string ball while carrying Mady over one shoulder who was leaning on the fist of one folded arm as he sighed at having to be carried.

"This isn't necessary, Sue... I can walk myself."

Sue merely grabbed his butt more firmly and purred while gnawing on the ball. I'd honestly never seen her like this... it must be the cradle affecting her. She was lucky... I palmed my stomach and clenched from the effects the cradle had on me, and with me it was getting worse.

Throbbing, pulsating, beating engorging, every step seeming to fuel the surging in my loins till I slowed and let go, panting as I found myself leaning on my staff while my loins spilled their nectar into the already sopping wet pants I wore; my sex super engorged and showing itself in remarkable clarity through the layers of my clothes. I climaxed and gasped, closing my eyes as my sex grew sopping wet as I gasped long and low, exhaling a green mist from my mouth even.

"Fellania?" Anho prompted as he turned and Sue was brought up short with Mady as she turned to face us.

"Fellania, are you all right?" Mady asked.

I panted, panted more deeply and slid to my knees with legs wide while moisture leaked from me all the more.

I couldn't bare it anymore, I started crying right there as my fists clenched White Oak, and Anho... who saw this, rose and stood between me and Sue and Mady.

"Go on ahead... I'll tend to her." Anhogamon said and Sue pulled the ball of string from her mouth.

"You sure?" she asked. "She doesn't look very well."

Anho glanced at me and gripped his swords and then nodded. "Yes... go." He said and Sue and Mad looked to each other, but finally did walk away.

Anho waited till they'd rounded the bend before he returned his attention to me, and I whimpered for the strain in my pussy.

"Fell... I..." Anho began, but up from the ground, lancing up both my legs and driving straight up my sex like a thickened cock burying itself to the bone, penetrating and lancing several ejaculating lances into me, a charge of spiritual energy plumed like a reactor about to overload in my bowels before withdrawing just as quickly as it'd entered.

I moaned long and low, green vapor expelling from my mouth right into Anho's and he reeled, coughed and seemed to grow dizzy as I bowed my head and gripped my cunt with one hand before falling sideways against the wall, right before another wave of spiritual power rushed along the wall and seemed to smear itself slowly over me before rushing on by up the tunnel.

"Fellania!" Anho groaned.

I lifted my eyes then as I panted, becoming overcome by the cradle's power now as I looked up at him, only so that he and I could see his cod plate rise slowly and the bulge in his black silk pants bow greatly outward as he coughed from the green vapor I was exuding.

My fur was sopping wet from sweat now and a cloud of pheromones so powerful it rose from me like a green cloud, billowing and puffing around me, while about my feet, such potent femininity that was growing in me made moss and pretty wild flowers grow spontaneously.

"I burn!" I sobbed, actually sobbed heavy tears as I ejaculated again a long pissing jet of nectar that made my loins even more sloppy, and I rubbed my crotch into my hand instead of the other way around in an attempt to relieve the pain... and it was painful...

All those weeks of heat were now growing painful to endure and I cried from it... actually cried from the incredible pleasure of it all, and a choking sob wracked itself from me.

"I... I... you should... you should lie down Fell." Anho urged and helped me to squat and then roll onto my back near that wall as my loins spilt again and still again, steam rising from that crotch to add to the green cloud.

But as I rolled onto my back, amazingly, serendipitously, I rolled into a bowl shape in the soft moss and grasses that was ringed with vines, and charging up the vines another spiritual flow snatched at me, pleasuring breasts and sex like a lover's hands and cock, teasing me with what must come now, billowing in my belly to where I fell into a fetal position and cradled my stomach with both hands and moaned again.

Anho was near me then, cradling my head as he helped me drink from his water skin.

"Tell me...what's happening to you... to us! I feel... what should I do Fellania? What do you want me to do?" Anho asked, and he caressed my cheek with his stubby little fingers.

"M-my heat it... ah... ahh!" I cried as another wave of spiritual power rushed up the hall and through me, intensifying parts of me till it felt like they'd explode! But my breasts spontaneously engorged, pushing upward and rolling apart, baring thickened chest muscles and hardened sternum. "It hurts! Ngh!"

Anho assessed the situation, looked me from head to toe multiple times, and then rising, he removed his sashes and belts and laid his swords aside reverently, and began to remove the pieces of his armor, setting them aside against the ground in well-laid order.

“An-ho...” I moaned, and then he opened his Gi, revealing that rosy chest and hardened layer of twelve abdominals and eight lats, the double chests and the six visible nipples in this form.

“I’ve heard of this... heard of the potency of virile females...” he mentioned as that bulge in his pants engorged outward, swelling, rolling outward as he quickly removed leg and thigh guards and just dropped them aside, and then opened his split-toe boots. “...so... powerful are their heats that it can fry their minds and poison their bodies.” He removed the wrap around shirt then and tossed it aside. “I... don’t want to lose you again, Fellania.”

“L-loose me?” I groaned, feeling stupid, feeling faint, but somewhere between him standing over me like that and my swoon, I felt his lips kiss mine, and I came immediately awake as if energized by a straight shot of adrenaline into my heart.

That heart throbbed, it pulsed and beat, and he pushed off my robes from off my chest and shoulders before caressing my leaking milk into my breasts, and throwing that robe aside, I was pushed backward as he kissed and kissed me, purring, his chest rumbling deeply and his body vibrating like a Harley Davidson motorcycle...

The world’s largest vibrator... or at least till now. Now that was my Anho.

My back arched as he lapped the milk off my tits, steam rising from my pits and the center of my chest as a flowering scent rose about us. The effect of spontaneous plant growth soon gave me a bed of silken flowers as my lover kissed his way down my body, tugging at the ties of the pants I wore, but having found that my legs were so thick and hard for him to peel those pants off, he guided my knees upward, pushed them together, rolled them to my chest, and with a spastic and powerful muscular jerk, he pushed my legs apart and the crotch of those side-tie pants ripped open right over my loins, disgorging a hot steamy wave of vapor from my crotch that wafted up his chest and into his face.

With so many pheromones in such an intense, sweet concoction mixed with my juices, it was enough to act as a vaporized aphrodisiac on him.

I moaned, tensing my legs slowly, the seams of those pants ripping about my legs slowly as he rubbed my bottom in that bent-legged position, and with his thumbs he slid his fingers along the furry patch guarding my womanhood, making me shiver as he pressured the engorged and blushing lips before parting their strength to disgorge the stamen of my clit... right before he dipped and began to suck on it.

I began to churl, coo and moan, my claws scoring the ground around me as I shivered and tensed from the pleasure suddenly growing even more intense; mind-numbingly so, inside my brain. I poised there, feet lowering to tip toes but legs spread wide as he let go of them, lapping at my sex with that tongue comb, lapping up the sexual juices leaking from me, right before he reached to his sides. When he arose, it was to push his own pants off, and that wicked sword of his – uncircumcised since his time was well before the advent of Christianity – he stripped off his pants, kneeling between my thighs, and studiously and quite directly handled that impressive rod of his, angled it, pressed it against my loins like before...

But this time there would be no distractions, no jeering voices of broodlings... this was... a perfect moment.

“Do it my love! Penetrate me!” I groaned and arched, legs spreading wider. “Love me!” I moaned long and low, exhaling more mist.

His erect manhood pressed against the lips of my womanhood, pressuring the lips aside and they slid genially open, broadening wide like they wanted to, his girth, strangely well-endowed for such a little guy, its thickness and length built perfectly for me... to pleasure me and no other, began to slip inside the knots of flesh that'd become of my womanhood. The first tenuous moments were made all the more intense from anticipation as the head of that cock slid inside me, my enveloping womanhood slipping sloppily about its mass as it delved deeper inside my sex, my moisture disgorging and washing over that cock to pre-moisten it as it slid home.

And the flesh of my loins spread open even wider, the sheathes of inner labial muscles drawing tight around that ribbed and veined shaft as it dipped passed the lips, passed the gates, pushing the flesh inside me apart in wave after sinuous wave as it penetrated me, stinging at first but after the pain was the soothing, immaculate pleasure of lovemaking.

But as it penetrated, it was like it popped the pressure of so many layered bubbles that were in me till he drove himself to the hilt, long-arming my hips with both hands, his thick nads resting over my bottom, and exhaling himself, the connection complete, my maidenhood now gone as my femininity shunted forcibly over toward womanhood, he began a slow, methodic sliding of in and out, rotating and twisting, cajoling as he balanced himself on me like a farmer might churn butter.

Biting my lower lip, I spread even further open, giving him free reign of me.

“Oh my sweet lord... take me as you will... take me as you will!” and I arched deeply, breasts thrust into the air as they rolled and jostled and bounced up and down about and into my face so that I could kiss them both if I wanted to, my nipples engorged towers that leaked milk atop the mountainous pair and shook their droplets onto my body, his body and the ground around us.

I bit my lower lip, I groaned, I chortled and whimpered in toe-curling ecstasy, both hands gripping the grasses and flowers and moss above my head alternatively with tugging at my hair and ears. I felt every ridge of that penis vibrate against my inner ridges, the bone-like protrusions of vaginal formations inside me causing the needed friction against the muscle ribs of that cock, aided by sticky nectar as he massaged my loins with one hand, lightly twisting and pressuring and tugging my clit to get my innards to lurch and clench like a steel trap around him.

“Beloved...” he groaned and pushed deeply, and then withdrew slowly, not completely... just to the tip before he plunged again.

Not yet... not yet there. There was still more shared pleasure to be had!

The word in reference to me made me weep, and I closed my eyes, shutting off that sense so as to better experience the pleasure steeling its way through me. I whimpered and began rolling my hips, the lovemaking growing faster and more energetic, harder and deeper he stroked; this little cat man pleasuring me, a bear of a woman!

I flexed my arms, and belly feeling the burning in the muscles while I gasped, the magics in me unfolding like a spreading lotus. Within my belly it unfolded, opening, hungrily sucking on the stamen of the bee coming to pollinate it. I tensed and whimpered as he thrust and slowly withdrew, love juices sliding from me and trickling over my bottom and tail. He thrust again, and every ribbing of that mighty cock vibrated my insides on bulging, engorging mass after the next.

Again he thrust and withdrew, and then again, but as he withdrew he thrust suddenly again, and pushed again, burying to the hilt as he shuddered suddenly, exhaling and jerking repeatedly into me, and I felt his mighty shaft rolling from base to tip, felt his nads bounce, and I felt myself relax as my insides were splashed repeatedly with... well... three hundred thousand years of pent of sexual power!

I was in heat and he'd just climaxed into me. There really was only one result for that sort of thing that I knew of, and the connection that happened so quickly, so immediate, it was a sure sign as to how ready this body was to become pregnant. But like a fire whose fuel was burning out, the heat in me slowly relaxed, and a cooling embraced my body and my mind as he once again continued in the slow pneumatic pumping motion just like an oil derrick pumping for oil.

And I breathed... while in my womb... our daughter was conceived.

Her name would be Portia.

I am Madoushi.

I sat beside my beloved as she sat on the edge of the hole leading downward while we waited for Fellania and Anhogamon, Sue finding a remarkable glee in a simple ball of string as she kicked her legs child-like while gnawing on the seemingly indestructible ball.

"I'm worried, dearest." I mentioned after awhile, standing there with hands in pockets while watching for our parents to come back. "This place is chaotic... I'm concerned something must've happened to them."

Sue spat the ball out into her hand, the thing laden with moisture of her spit as she turned and smirked up at me.

"Fellania... who's been in heat for God knows how long, is with the one and only guy she's dreamed off since she was a child, in the Cradle of Life. Beloved... leave them be."

I folded my arms as Sue began to throw the ball up and catch it, laughing joyously.

"I'm still concerned." I voiced and took a deep breath, and eyed Sue throwing up and catching the obviously magical ball of string that was meant to distract her from the box.

Lifting a hand I caught it when she threw it up to get her attention.

"H-hey. I was playing with that." She pouted and I sighed at her.

"Dearest... we can't just stand up here waiting for them." I told her, and she looked up at me and started nodding, before the most feral grin ever began to cross her face. "What?"

"I get it now... you're bored!" she giggled.

"Among other things." I admitted and looked about me. The swirling spirits here were one concern, the fact that the Dreamtime and the real world were one here was another. It was a concern! The cradle was a dream... the cradle was real... this was a vortex where so many different... so many different...I blinked, and then lowered my head as

my arms went limp with the ball still in my hand as I looked upon Sue as she was nuzzling my groin. "Ah... dearest... what are you eh... ah... doing?!"

I spasmed suddenly as her hand slid up into my belly pocket, lifting it as she stuck her muzzle up inside it to lick my belly nipples before she found one and sucked on it.

"Ah... ah! Sue!" I groaned, only to find her hands deftly unbuckling my belt and undoing the pants beneath them before she rose to her knees, towering above me in her current form even on her knees, before she lightly pushed off the simple elastic capris pants she was wearing, revealing her naked sex to me that glistened already with moisture as she worked her legs in a shimmy to rid herself of those pants, her tail rising upward into an arch. "Susan... what are you doing?"

"What's it look like silly. You won't let me play with my new ball... so I'm going to play with yours." She giggled and pulled open her chest wrap, disgorging those four immense primaries before unshouldering those clothes to kneel naked before me.

"Sue..." I groaned as she cupped my groin as it unfolded and swelled, bulging, telescoping out of my shorts before she fished out my rod and promptly pulled its girth between her breasts and its tip into her mouth before she began suckling on it, stroking my groin slowly in a brilliant hand job.

Soon clothes were discarded and I fell forward onto her chest when she leaned back, my butt on her sternum, her lower two breasts beneath me, her primaries still pressed about my junk as she lapped and licked and sucked...

Smirking and leaning back, my shaman satchel shifting along my waist, I reached back and dug my fingers into her pussy, pleasuring her in return.

And she was right... we needed to do something while we waited for Fell and Anho to return.

Anho was still driving my pussy with his cock... now I laid on my belly, using now subtly deflated breasts as he pleased me and I cooed, sighed nasally and moaned to each of his jostling thrusts. The angry sex had been just the first few minutes, the subtle lovemaking so far had lasted for hours... there in the cradle, and it was only now that he dismounted, his cock sliding between my butt cheeks as he crawled onto my back and laid there, still purring loudly with his body massaging mine just by laying against me.

I felt so relaxed... so soothed... I just wanted to close my eyes and dream a dream.

But Anho was laying kisses upon me now, using his strong fingers to knead and pet-paw my back like a cat might do as it was softening an area to lie down upon. Inside me my womb churned... and I felt a wellspring of life rising inside me, a new power as my sexuality began shifting straight from womanhood to pregnant mother now... my druidic powers surging inside me and I felt the inner strength in me making me stronger and stronger.

And then Anho laid against me, purring into my ear as he licked behind one of those ears lovingly, rubbing my breasts from behind as they smooshed beneath me.

"My sweet beloved." He said and I cooed in elation.

He'd get the strength up soon enough, and he and I would love more... poor Sue and Mady... they must be worried sick... but this was my perfect moment... well hour now... and I wanted to go for two. Right now... some rest... just some rest... later we'd return to our friends... but for now... rest.

With the heat abating from me... I kind of deserved it this time.

I am Remy LeBeau.

I stood quietly at a private place behind the Shrine, a grand open place that was made for the explicit purposes of funerals and weddings and birthings. This was a place of the shrine, rather unique, in which the entire life cycle was exemplified.

Birth... union... and death... those three explicit ceremonies were held here in the shrine and here alone.

Grandfather's wrapped corpse burned green as Wererats often did. We were so virulent and filled with disease and poison that we burned green when set to flame. The smoke had to be vented upward and outward while birds that dared to fly overhead through the smoke immediately fell dead to the ground from inhalation.

It's a wonder the Maker lets such creatures as us live.

I was so focused on the pyre that I didn't realize the approach of a young woman, pregnant with my children, till she appeared in the corner of my vision. I turned to her to see the unnatural scowl on her face... right before she jabbed me in the right side quite painfully.

"That's for leaving me out." She said, and then her demeanor changed and she moved before me, opening my Gi and bending to my left side, over the wound that she kissed, sucked poison out and spat to the ground. The stone it landed on hissed violently. "That's for the words you said beloved." She said and sucked again and again, spitting it out each time while my grandfather burned like the son of a bitch that he was.

She tended to my wound, applying ointments before wrapping me up with bandages as I watched my grandfather's husk wither away. She used a little healing magics on my wound even before she rose and embraced me gently, stood with me until the last mote of that bastard burned in fire.

"Go to hell you sick fuck." I mentioned quietly, and Sen, noting that the deed was done now, tugged on me and led me with kisses toward our bedroom where she undressed me, undressed herself, and laying me down into my nest, taking my hand and placing it on her belly, laid with me with her breasts pillowing my head.

This... this moment, this was the first time in my entire life that I'd ever really felt...

Safe.

The insect world was the one that often had larger females being mated with by smaller males... only I wasn't going to chase Anho off, rip his head off and eat his body after making love with him.

Lovemaking was everything I ever heard it being and more... it was making love to a person. It wasn't the inconsequential unfamiliarity of sex with a stranger, this was love. Sex was a rapid getting your gun off... lovemaking was long, exuberant sharing of pleasure, and now this was our eighteenth time, and hours had passed by.

And even with me relaxing utterly from the heat rapidly waning from me, to leave me with a chilling cool, but this time I straddled his lap and he was in the bed of moss and flowers as I rose and fell slowly on his immaculate dick, my burgeoning legs spread wide while he massaged and took to palming my belly with both hands.

He must know that my womb was filling with my daughter as I arched over myself and we kissed, paused, kissed again and then made out, my thighs spreading wider to sink onto him while my voluminous mammaries pillowed across his whole chest.

He lifted his hands to my ears and began rubbing their edges and I gurgled in pleasure.

My ears had always been a secret pleasure of mine. They were so sensitive, but the right little nip, the right little piercing, the right little tweak could totally incapacitate me. That's why I never got my ears pierced... but to have a delightful little man-cat in or on me, pleasuring me, nibbling on my ears during all this time with his needle sharp teeth, I totally relaxed in a way I never recalled being able to do before.

I had only a few decades of repressed sexual energy... He had a few hundred millennia.

He lifted himself and hung off my neck, fitting firmly between my breasts and began nibbling that ear and I panted as my loins clenched and unclenched repeatedly.

From there our last romp led us twisting and cajoling, rolling and trading places till at long last, once again, he laid against my monumental back, his prick hot-dogging my behind as he again nibbled and licked my ear. But now he rubbed his forehead against my head and nuzzled before speaking to me.

"For years... for years and years that felt like it was forever I dreamed of a mate and a child... a house to come back to... a garden to tend like my grandmother had done... a possible son in the future. I dared to dream of those things." He told me. "They calmed me as I meditated in that icy cave so long ago... they let me slow my body and hibernate."

I was quiet for a moment and merely opened my eyes as he licked and nibbled again before I spoke.

"Our child is growing in me now Anho. It's a girl. Her name should be..."

"Portia." He said in tune with me. "Yes... that would be well... beloved."

I smiled at hearing that and settled into the flowery moss-covered ground. This was my moment... and his. It was so peaceful here that we two just settled in and slept for awhile...

At peace.

Chapter 8: Three Times Three Equals Nine

It might've been odd... two men and two women suddenly appearing in the back of the shrine butt naked together, those people immediately heading off to the bath house to wash off the rigors of their exertions, and unlike before I really, really didn't mind being openly naked in my human form with these friends and the man I was in love with.

Shrine Maidens brought in robes for us to wear when we were done, brought in fresh heated sake with lemon, sweet bread and biscuits for a breakfast.

There was more lovemaking later as we found our own private places with each other, and Anho showed me the commanding dominance he had over my love hole.

Afterward as we lounged in soft silk robes... there was talk of a shared wedding, Anho simply holding my hand through the entire conversation, while when I didn't have a drink in my hand, I was massaging my rippling belly.

In the evening after our return, there was a celebration. No one but the four of us knew why, but it was a celebration nonetheless. Somehow – I suspected Pen – it got out that not only was Sue and I pregnant, but there was going to be a wedding.

Shrine maidens and some monks showered us with attention and gifts, all while Pen sat back quietly in his large cushion at the front of the room, smirking at us.

Pen couldn't help himself apparently.

Soon afterward, though, it appeared as if Sue and I weren't the only fems with a bun in the oven, and soon after it was announced that Sen, the fem that was hanging around Remy was pregnant as well... with twins even! They wanted to marry as well, and with a little conversation, the duo of marriages turned into a trio.

Three fems pregnant before marriage? Elsewhere such a thing would be shameful... but we were Lycan... so who cares?

I am Sue.

Fell, Sen and me all agreed that while we were in Japan, that we do as the Japanese do. The Japanese wedding dresses were so~ beautiful too. White patterned white silk and linens, printed with flowers and... oh! It was so lovely!

The shrine had a tailor, one of the old priests who'd made many wedding dresses in his time, each customized for each woman who'd entered into holy matrimony within the shrine. And now he was fussing at a hem near to my feet, trying to get the length just right when there was a knock at the door.

"Knock, knock..." a male said and I turned as delicately as I could so as not to throw off the tailor's work.

I feared Mad... I still felt it was bad luck for the groom to see the dress before it was time, but the male who'd entered was actually Ivan... cradling one of his kittens as he walked in his boots now.

"Ivan! Where've you been hiding?" I greeted.

“In your room in the closet.” *He smirked.* “Thank you for the cream, by the way... Mew loved it.”

“Well she’s my kitty! And my kitty get’s pampered.”

“Much to my appreciation.” *Ivan swept into a bow.* “But I come bringing gifts, tovarichka.”

“Gifts?” *I blinked.* “The wedding isn’t for a few days yet.”

“Too true... but this is, of course... the time that guests are supposed to arrive.”

“Guests?”

And Ivan stepped back and gestured and none other than Tanya, Queen of the Siberian Tigers, slid around the corner and I squealed.

“Tanya! You came!” *and I turned fully around and the Tailor hissed something in Japanese, I didn’t know what, but apparently Tanya did because she gave him a glowering look.*

“Come back later... we girls must catch up. And how dare you use such language around the little one... these are the robes she’ll marry in! Shame on you.” *The old man donned his cap and harrumphed as he strode out, Ivan following along.* “But look at you little one... so becoming!”

“You and Fell are the only ones that I think can call me little anymore.” *I smirked and we embraced like sisters.* “I’m so glad that you could come!”

“This is a momentous occasion. The politicking was put on hold back home, I told everyone I was going to go to a wedding and that was that.”

I smirked at her. “It’s good to be the Queen.”

“And it’s good to be married to the King.” *She smirked and we sat in opposite chairs, I was very careful of my new dress.* “When the other royals protested, Dmitri roared as he so rarely does, and they silenced immediately. When he’s being stalwart, just and right... he takes your breath away. He makes me hot.” *She leaned in with a wink and a smirk and we giggled like girls.*

“Oh I’m glad you can make it. Was... um... was anyone else able to come?”

“Well now that you mention it...” *Tanya mused.*

“Sister!” *and there was a running down the hall before the most buxom tigress in creation rounded the doorway... Tanya’s little sister, Anya.*

Oh she was strong like her sister all right... but her strength was only so much as to support such a chest. She grew a little stronger since I last met her... but she was likewise much given to being pregnant a lot. With the blow the Russian Tigers took... having such a virile female with much milk and hips and fertility to raise young was an incredible boon. Tanya’s enormous chest fit her bulk, Anya’s chest needed her bulk to keep her upright. There would be no hand stands or bending over though.

“Sister... I’ve never been to Tokyo... can we go shopping? I’d like to add some shoes to my collection.”

“Shoes?” *I blinked. I owned two pair. This wedding would give me a third. I never understood my own gender’s affiliation for shoes.*

“Maybe a little bit.” *Tanya smiled subtly, sitting like a queen in her chair.* “We have to throw a bachelorette party after all. You... Anya and me... and... who are the other brides?”

“Sen and Fellania.” *I added, and Tanya nodded.*

“We will.” *She told her sister and Anya squealed, hugged her sister and then hugged me... apparently for giving her a reason to shop in one of the largest cities in the world before she hurried off.* “It amazes me how Daniel can keep her entertained so.” *But I was frowning.* “Sue? What’s wrong?”

“Lee’s here.” *I said simply and Tanya frowned immediately.*

“When I heard that you were marrying a different man... I assumed it didn’t go well with him. Why is he here?”

I sighed and massaged my belly. “There is... a complication.”

Tanya stared at me, her eyes told me she understood everything. “Never consider your child the complication.” *She warned, and reached out to take my hands.* “And do not dwell on it. You chose your man, that man must be your child’s father. Lee is the complication in all this.”

“Thanks.” *I smiled.*

“Absolutely.” *She smirked.* “Now then, Susan... I want you to get finished hemmed, get some old clothes on because we’re going to let Anya be your stylist today and dress you up in the latest fashion as we girls go out on the town tonight.”

The day of the wedding came quickly.

Tanya, queen of tigers, threw a marvelous bachelorette party for us, right to the point where we actually got drunk. Anya and Tanya spoke Japanese, so it wasn’t too much of a difficulty getting around, but while we were partying... the guys... well...

Anho’s true exposure to Tokyo came as Daniel – Tanya’s warder and Anya’s husband – and Dmitri – King of the Siberian Tigers – with Tanya’s younger brother Peter, took Remy, Anhogamon and Madoushi club hopping.

Mad and Anho came back with looks on their faces that was true culture shock.

“Where did you go my love?” I asked my Anho later.

“That... Daniel... wished to ‘go clubbing’ as he put it, and at first I thought he was going to bludgeon some people around.” I chuckled as I could imagine the thought process, knowing what it was to really go clubbing after all. “But then instead of a battle arena, instead we were brought into a sort of a brothel.”

“A brothel?!” I blinked.

“Only I’m familiar to females being more heavily dressed and more refined than these girls. There was stuffing bills into the straps of the... oh what is it called... it’s those women’s undergarments you and Susan wear.”

“Panties?”

“Yes those. Only I believe that Daniel referred to it as a ‘*G-String*’? I’m not sure why they call it a G-string, especially since it’s not in the shape of a G.”

“It’s a naughty reference...” I growled, and made a thought to go meet this Daniel fellow.

“They were dancing around poles, and wearing the least amount of clothing I’ve ever seen on a female short of being naked. They paid these girls to do a... lap dance?”

“Excuse me... I have a tiger to go throttle...” I grumbled and rose, and went looking for this Daniel person, only to find... the biggest man I’d ever seen in my life.

Huge, ripped muscles and a back that would’ve given the Titan Atlas a run for his money, this Daniel was supremely muscled and ripped and... facing Lee.

“I thought it was you that I spied roaming around these halls, Lee.” This man who towered over Lee by more than a head, reaffirming the concept that Russians were big and strong... seriously! It was no joke! This guy was friggin *huge*! “I have no idea why you’re here, but you’d better damn well stay away from my mate.”

Lee stared at this Daniel. “Thanks... as if I don’t have enough wounds at the moment you and your mate have to come along and open old ones. I appreciate it fellow warder... I really do. After your mate figuratively ripped my heart out and stamped on it... for you...” Lee shook his head and exhaled a long sigh... and from this angle I saw the cat-man’s eyes looking very tired and very hurt. “Never mind...” and Lee stepped past Daniel. “Enjoy the woman and the children that could’ve been mine, Daniel of the North.” And Lee traipsed onward, walking with a bit of a limp I see.

Once he’d passed by though, I stepped up to Daniel.

“Ah... ah I see.” He smirked. “I will apologize first then, Lady Fellania. It was meant as... a practical joke.”

Despite that he spoke English very fluently, there was just a small bit of Russian in his speech, and he paused occasionally as if trying to gather the appropriate translations in his head. But until this moment, I’d not yet met a man who was actually taller than me. Sure it was only by half a head, but having lived my whole life being taller than any other humanoid, and stronger, finding this muscular powerhouse of a man... was truly awe inspiring to me.

Oh nowhere near awe-inspiring enough to go after this guy instead of Anho... how dare any of you even suggest that. I was just impressed that the Northern Tigers had such an incredible creature as their warder. And he was so polite too.

“Well, I don’t care! My Anho has never been to a place anywhere so big as Tokyo, and you brought him to a strip club?! How dare you... I mean...” and I figuratively chewed his ear off for half an hour.

Hopefully... we could avoid any more embarrassing moments like that.

There were identities forged, papers signed to make it all official, and Anhogamon and Madoushi were quietly snuck into human society through a contact of Pen's that he only referenced to as 'Aysyx.' It was considered that since Sue and I were American nationals, that Anho and Mad should be as well... but I don't know... I was beginning to like Japan. It was growing on me... or rather I was growing on it.

But as a complication, Madoushi never had a surname... his people didn't keep one three hundred years ago. It was a complication because certain papers needed to be filed with the Japanese government offices as well as the United States Consulate. As such, Sue and Madoushi were married underneath the surname of Yamaneko... or '*Mountain Cat*'.

Well... it fits Sue all right... she was one great big mountain of a cat, and Mad was sort of a cat...

But as for Anho...

This land has always been in his blood... as it was mine. Anhogamon became a Japanese national instead of an American, and following in the traditions of the Samurai, when a ronin was no longer considered a ronin, they typically took upon themselves the name of the house of the master that they now serve...

As such... that became a problem.

Anhogamon didn't take a surname lest he'd earned one... so Pendragon, once again appearing in his usual serendipitous way and solved the bigger problems that there were in the world.

"Anhogamon... I have a problem." He interrupted that day. "I would like to ask for your aide on something very pressing."

"Grandmaster... I... we were having a rather personal discussion. Could it not wait?"

"Oh... but my request has something very much to do to add to your conversation." Anho and I looked at each other in confusion... I forgot to be annoyed by his interruption. "You see, my shrine normally has five masters within it. One for each of the five traditional elements of Japanese mysticism: Earth, Fire, Water, Steel and Wood. I've not had a Master of the Steel in... well... more than several human generation now. I'm afraid my last one retired himself after the fall of the Japanese Empire."

"These humans on this island had an empire?" Anho squinted in confusion. "Wait... what do you mean he '*Retired Himself*'?"

Pen took a cookie and a tea cup and filed it and merely stared rather meaningfully at Anhogamon when he answered. "It was seventy years ago... and he felt one day that he'd failed his emperor by not providing for him. He did what he thought was honorable. Great Maker... I want you to understand exactly how pissed off I am about honor, Anhogamon. Maru was a potent swordsman."

"I don't understand... what... did this Maru do that..." I began but with a glance from Pen and a gripping of my hand from Anho, I felt that I should quiet myself before I learned more than I should.

“Regardless Anho... I need a Master of the Steel in a time when those who practice Steel are very rare. I have several possible candidates... but none of them, utterly none of them, are a thousandth part as potent as you are. But there are certain other obligations that would be placed upon you, Anhogamon.”

“Wait a minute Pen... how does this pertain to our conversation. We’re talking about not being able to marry because Anho doesn’t have a surname.”

“Wait, dear heart...” Anho blinked. “Grandmaster... are you... are you asking me to serve your shrine... as it’s guardian? A master inside it?”

“I am... If you accept.” Pen smirked before taking a bite out of the cookie.

Anhogamon got to his feet and promptly bowed expertly. “You Honor me so by...”

“Ah!” Pen interrupted with a lifted finger. “No... it is my privilege. But I am glad that you are honored, noble Samurai. Traditions will be followed... and as such... you will now have your name. I may not be the one who intended to give you a name for the success of your quest, Anhogamon, certainly the Empress would’ve, but I am nevertheless privileged to be the one to do it. Wear it well. I will make the arrangements.”

I blinked at this, and Anho looked like he’d just accomplished his life long quest again.

“I don’t understand... what happened?” I asked.

“I... I’m... I’m no longer a Ronin.” He almost breathed it then.

No... no he wasn’t. A ronin, when taken in by a master or a lord, takes the name of the house that he now serves, or the shrine he now serves. Similar to Joan of Arc... a woman from a place, the concept is very similar to how a Samurai gains his name. But in Anho’s case... it meant that he was now known as Anhogamon Pendragon.

Well... honestly there were worse names, I considered with a smile after hearing what my new name would be.

Sue and me and Remy’s mate Sen, were all dressed in matriarchal white robes mixed with the robes of a bride in the Shinto way, done up exquisitely in all three cases in ways that accented our bosoms and bellies, with elaborate head coverings with hair rods – White Oak did that part for me though – with elaborate hair designs and hair stays, while each of us wore a dowry paid by Pendragon himself in fine gold jewelry and white patterned silks with a mixture of Jade and Sapphire to match the eyes of each bride.

The grooms were likewise in the black garb of traditional Japanese groomsmen, Though as an honored Samurai, Anho was likewise dressed in armor, complete with his Katana and Wakizashi, Remy with twin Wakizashi and silver forearm guards and Madoushi with an elaborate scroll stuck in his belt based upon their stations and roles.

Pen, as it so happened to be, was a Shinto Priest and married the three of us together. He had to stand on a four foot raised podium, but nevertheless, each couple were blessed and married in accordance to Tradition and Japanese Law.

Our wedding began with a grand purification service.

I'd attended these services before, but there was a certain additional power in the rite when it was presided over by an Ancient dragon like Pen, a dragon who was connected not only with the Japanese islands, but with their most sacred mountain itself. This shrine was likewise a holy of holies, sacred ground that was still very much a part of the sacred mountain, and had been cultivated as such for half a million years... possibly more.

A Shinto wedding is typically attended by members of both families and close relatives in addition. The problem with that... is that we had very little relations. Sue, had no one back home... I was essentially her friend and her family. Anhogamon knew no one, and likewise Madoushi was in very much the same boat as Anho was. The only person who had family... was me. Remy wanted nothing to do with his clan and they were eager to forget him, and Sen was an orphan

My mother and my father along with my two brothers and baby sister came, and mom was very, very proud of me, as were my two brothers, who both jibbed and poked jabs at me as usual that I was *finally* taking a mate... and my sister who couldn't stop tearing up at seeing me in such a pretty dress with a cub growing inside me. But to say that our wedding was completely empty would've been a bit premature. Dad merely stood over me and inhaled very, very deeply, beaming with pride for his '*little girl*'.

Our wedding was attended to by hundreds... but of course just over three hundred of them involved the dragons in the shrine. I tried not to think of it, but apparently the egg gestation stage of a female Fairy Dragon – one of the few dragon species left that still laid eggs, Pen said Fairy Dragons were the Platypuses of the dragon world – was a matter of weeks before they clutched. While they incubated literally hundreds of eggs, the female would grow many times her previous weight... all in belly girth. So Poon was presently laying comfortably atop a pillow in a wheel barrow, barely able to see over her already enormous belly, tail and feet hanging off the edge of the barrow while three hundred of their broodlings stood around them. And just like any other kid at a wedding... some were quietly playing, drawing, writing, picking their noses... etc.

Ivan and Mew had stayed as well, complete with their kittens around them. The magical cats were adorable in their ribbons and collars. Ivan kept tugging at his, and a boy cat was tugging on a girl cat's bow as they lightly roughhoused in play.

The only other dragon aside from the fairy dragons was Abraxis, the towering gold samurai dragon from Anhogamon's past. He stood beside Pen during the whole ceremony and in one hand was a silk wrapped thing that he didn't hold lightly, but nevertheless held quite reverently.

And of course there was the Midiev extend family. Tanya and Dmitri and their children, Anya and Daniel and their many children, Peter and that beautiful fem Whisper and their children.

Comparing the Midievs with the Bloodclaws, however, was no small task, no pun intended. I'd overheard jabs and quips between the two groups of them. With my brothers easily as large as even Daniel was, and my father definitely a mountain – nevertheless a good-natured one – even in his human form, was seen slapping the King of the Tigers on the back and nearly knocking him over amidst downing a jug of Sake mixed with some Jagermeister. One could almost see the sweat drop on Dmitri's brow when my dad challenged him to a bout of sumo wrestling. Dad's always wanted to try sumo wrestling.

Everyone was here... and as a matter of fact I think the only one in the entire shrine who *wasn't* here... was Lee. I even saw Lilly Jade out there!

Each couple required a '*Go-Between*' to be traditional. The King and Queen of the Russian tigers themselves acted that part for Sue and Madoushi. My mother and father acted for Anho and me. Remy and Sen... though... opted for no Go-Between... simply because they wished to show how desolate their families were: Namely two orphans coming together, forming the roots for the base of their own tree.

A procession was made that consisted of grooms and brides each following a pair of shrine maidens and followed by a priest who held a large umbrella over them, the go-betweens, if they were used, flanking both bride and groom.

Anho and me were the first procession, followed by Mady and Sue, and finally by Remy and Sen. We lined up with Anho and me before Pen, Mady and Sue to his right and Remy and Sen to the left, and then the wedding began.

After a short ritual by Pen, oaths were exchanged, but not rings... Lycans couldn't wear rings because we needed to transform. Instead, in order to satisfy the '*San-San-Kudo*', or Ceremony of the Three-Times-Three, we exchanged slip jewelry instead, jewelry that was worn around the neck and had a tag instead of a ring, and could spread open or narrow depending upon what form we were in.

After the Ceremony, just the brides and grooms proceeded to the sanctuary to offer twigs of the '*Sakaki*' sacred tree in worship to the old gods of Japan to end the main part of the ceremony.

Drinks of Sake were exchanged between members and close relatives of both families to signify their union through the wedding, but the most marvelous thing about this whole ceremony was that somehow, it was that serendipitous thing about Pendragon and everything around him, but the Cherry Blossoms were falling perpetually upon the land in a strong sea breeze. To make this another of those perfect moments, the soft and gentle playing of traditional music made this a day to remember.

It's a short and simple, but very solemn service, full of solemn atmospheres.

The reception and the banquet that came afterward was spared no expense either.

It was a lovely ceremony, really, with the six of us surrounded by masters and students and priests and shrine maidens and... Geisha? Well I thought they were Geisha at first, a large group of them arrived late in the ceremony but wouldn't invade the air of the ceremony. Instead they held themselves at a distance until it was all over.

But what I took to be Geisha was instead a rather interesting, and likewise a very surprising surprise predominantly for Remy.

They were Wererats... mostly women, but the eldest, most decorated and honored of the group was...

"Mother..." Remy gasped as he beheld the short little white mouse in layers of patterned silk. She was such a flawless beauty, even for a woman with a son as well matured as Remy was. She looked to be in her twenties still... hardly woman enough to have a son let alone a son that old.

"So grown up." She mused. "So strong, so bright." She said in a voice that was like a sigh, but knowing rats, I counted several dozen weapons arrayed all around her already, each of them hidden in her robes and in her elaborately done hair. "Your father would be proud." And she tapped his temple. "Who else would be worthy of his eyes?"

"M-ma... I want you to meet Sen." He said and Sen quietly curtsied.

"Oh-ho. A bride... and a pregnant bride."

"With twins." Sen beamed.

"Oh-ho. Really. A fertile mother at that. And as for introductions Remy," and she turned, accepted a little bundle from a lady-in-waiting and then passed the bundle onto Remy. "This is your little Sister. Fiona."

Remy was beaming so grandly he shone through his fur. Apparently... Remy at least still did have roots.

“How... where... I’ve searched for you ma... I looked for you for years but I couldn’t find you. Where were you? Where did you come from?”

“A little dragon fly found me.” She bemused... but there is plenty of time for that later my sweet little Remy. You have a wife... and though you want to speak the night away with me, it is proper for you to forget your mother for now... and go be with your wife. I will be here tomorrow.”

“You’re staying?” he seemed relieved.

“The little dragon fly brought me and my students in, he’s given us sanctuary... so... I think at least... we shall stay for a time and see how it suits us. Now off with you. Your wedding beds are getting cold.”

After the wedding nights, which were wild... really wild I’ll have to admit with Anho and me... it was like what he did to me in the cradle was just a duty... a duty to relieve the stresses on my body and clear my mind, but that night, now that he had a name and he had me... I got to see those private hidden passions he truly did possess. I will not tell you of them here, no I won’t... those are mine and I’m not sharing that most precious hidden gem that he is underneath all that rough, abrasive coal. Besides... he wouldn’t like it if I were to talk about his true inner self. I was to be the only one privileged to receive that.

But the very next day, amidst sporadic lovemaking repeatedly whenever we fell into each other’s arms, we managed to come downstairs for meals only to stumble upon some sort of ritual in place in the main auditorium.

That Abraxis individual was still here, only he was dressed in a regal white robe, and he sat directly before Pen’s giant pouf that he sat on so that he was at eye level with the people he spoke with. Pen was always dressed in white robes, but these robes matched what Abraxis wore. On top of that, the other four masters of the Shrine sat to the left and right of Pen, and the Senseis of the shrine formed a double line leading up to the door that we entered through, while a number of the students surrounded the central room along the walls.

The moment we entered, the lot of them, with the exception of Abraxis and Pen bowed over themselves.

“Thank you for joining us, honored Anhogamon.” Pendragon announced. “Please... enter.”

Anho squeezed my hand tightly and I swallowed, thinking I knew what was happening here, and whereas Anho was bidden to enter, I was not, so he left my side and moved toward the central dais before kneeling at a position a step beneath the central dais.

At long last, the purpose of Abraxis and his silk covered object at our wedding in a place of was made known: he was the sword bearer, the reason why he was in a place of honor was that he was the witness of a long series of rituals that I didn’t even recognize were going on, maybe not even Anho for that matter, being that this sort of ritual might be new to him, but nevertheless, there was etiquette when the masters of the shrine were arrayed before you and you were bidden to enter by the Grandmaster himself.

I stood and watched with remarkable anticipation as Abraxis untied the silk covering in his hands and flipped open the end, revealing the pommel of a black silk wrapped handle of a white coral pommel with two gold coiling dragons inside it. The sword was undone and the black silk that had held the sword and its elegant black polished sheathe tossed idly aside as Abraxis held up the sword and inspected it in its sheathe and pommel, before a student

rose and held out his hands and Abraxis unsheathed the sword and placed the black sheathe in the students hands before Abraxis now inspected the silver polished blade of folded steel.

The Japanese art of sword making, though different from European swords, was nonetheless garnered to be among the best in the world. It held a place along with Damascus steel and Toledo steel, Japanese steel and the art of the Samurai Katana Sword was an artful design of molding and strengthening steel into the blade that Abraxis now inspected back and edge and curve to detect its perfection.

Once the inspection was complete, the sword was turned in ritualistic and purposeful ways akin to a marine going through close-order drills with his rifle, before the edge pointed up, the pommel was thrust toward the recipient: Anhogamon.

Anhogamon reached out and placed his right hand on the sword, in which that hand was gripped by Abraxis, and the same followed when Anho took it also by his left hand, and the sword was lifted and held by Anho, elevated and erect, the long gleaming metal shining brilliantly in the lights of the shrine.

It was then that Abraxis bowed over himself.

“This sword is the symbol of the Master of Steel.” Pen mentioned at last. “Draw it only in a moment of the Shrine’s need; do not draw it unless you intend to take the blood of another. Only in this moment of passing it onto you may the edge remain unblemished with the life of others. Guard this house as one of its five masters, Honorable Anhogamon of Pendragon.

“This house is most honored to have a warrior of your prowess and your station grace these halls.”

And now Pen bowed and the whole of the room bowed. For some reason I found myself in tears, crying that joy that my Anho felt but nonetheless wouldn’t express. Anho rose to a stand, still holding the sword as students tied on a red sash with the sheathe to his left side... the place where he preferred for his swords to reside.

“You honor me greatly, Grandmaster.” He said and bowed over the blade, and standing tall, with a magicians flourish, he held the sword to his side as students passed an oiled cloth along the blade before he then sheathed it flawlessly.

“From this day forth you are known as *‘Master Anhogamon’* Pendragon stated. Welcome into my home.”

The room voiced a word in Japanese I didn’t understand and there was rhythmic clapping for a few seconds before Anho turned smartly and left with soldier’s precision, and he strode down the hallway away from sight, except my sight, and paused down the hall before his hand snapped to the pommel of the ornate blade and he leaned as if weak against a wall.

I hurried to him and hugged his arm, my bosom resting on his shoulders, and when he turned to me his eyes were lit, shining with tears that wouldn’t fall before he lightly turned to me and embraced me with one arm about the towering and cable-thick muscles of my side and lower back before he leaned his head into my bosom.

He was so overjoyed at the moment he was trembling.

Decades... centuries for as much as I was aware of... were just finally realized. It was the role all Ronin wished for. I’d learned enough to know that Samurai meant *‘Service’*, a Samurai served his lords, his master or his shrine. But in this case My Anhogamon had been made a master unto himself, a Samurai in the house of a noble dragon, he was

given a name, he was given title, he had me, we were going to have a little girl in a few months time... all those things that he'd lost in his damn quest were returned to him.

As such... after losing everything he gained everything and more instead. As such... my Anhogamon was like unto Job.

"Anhogamon..." came a soft voice followed by the tap of a staff.

We broke to see Pen standing there, slightly smaller than Anho himself was, with a staff that was as tall as I was. He was still dressed like a white-robed Yoda.

"Grandmaster I..." Anhogamon turned and was about to bow before Pen lifted a hand to stop him.

"I appreciate the honorarium, Anho," he smirked. "Formalities are for formal occasions, and here in this hall we are informal. Stand up straight, shoulders back, and you may call me Pen if you wish, or Pendragon. This is a shrine not a barracks, and I'd have you be formal only when it requires it."

"Indulge me then just this once, Grandmaster." And Anho bowed sharply at the waist before rising slightly, and Pen smirked.

"Indulged then," Pen smiled. "But... there is someone here today... someone that I wish to refer to as a *most* important guest in my home. He has asked to meet with you specifically."

"Meet with me? An honored guest? I don't understand."

"Which is the way he'd have it. Believe me... much of what he does I consider an inside joke." Pen smirked again. "You must be privy to certain information he will not relay to understand a lot of what he does. But I will let you understand the only way he is able to do the great good he does in the world, is because so many people don't understand who he really is, let alone why he does what he does. But like me... he... watches people." And Pen glanced at me meaningfully and I blinked in surprise.

Pen himself watched people... he watched and cultivated bloodlines, Sue's and mine were among them. To meet another person like Pen... I could only imagine!

"Please... come with me." Pen turned and gestured for us to follow. "He's most excited to meet you..." he paused in his step and turned to me now. "And you as well." Pen nodded and continued in his little waddling step.

And so we followed Pen, and as we followed, I began to become aware of a field of magic so grand and so powerful that I hadn't noticed it before. It was so far-reaching that it felt like a part of the background magic of the world itself, and when we were let into a side room of the shrine, it was to come before a semi-circle of individuals of the likes of which I'd never thought existed before.

First and foremost was a man in a stylish black suit and tie. Tres Chic wasn't nearly strong enough of a word to describe the clothing he wore. A single-breasted suit that had its lower ends crisscrossing down to his knees, and an opened collar to show a black tie. Silver linings were at the cuffs of his pants and arms and he looked rather lean and hawkish, especially in the face. But he had this pristine white hair that hung past his shoulders and was held taut at its end by a leather thong. But his eyes... his eyes were indeed the most ancient of eyes – besides Pen's that is – but were a shade of blue that was like the sea after a storm. They shone so brightly one was caught by those

eyes even in the well lit red and gold decor of the room. He stood with legs shoulder-width apart and had a straight cane gripped in both his long-fingered hands.

Flanking him to either side were two heavily armored knights, both of whom wore long draping cloaks that hide everything beneath the heavily armored and layered back and shoulder pauldrons and the chest plates. One was red, and burned like he was the anger that was left in the world after what we deposited in Pandora's Box in the Cradle of Life, and the other was a soft, dark blue, and seemed to be calm and peaceful.

Beside the blue knight was a tall, lean yet supremely muscular woman, it was an effect that was unreal and hard to describe, but I believe it was the Amazonian dimensions of her arms and legs and the narrowness of her midsection and neck that gave her that lean look. She had an ample bosom and wore strictly blue. Her hair was even a light sea-blue and it cascaded all the way to the ground to reside on a blue gown that slid along the floor... and even her eyes were a liquid blue that were the color of ice in a glacier.

To the other side of the line, standing beside the Red Knight was a white robed man with white hair and a white twisted White Oak staff – White Oak, residing in my hair as always, trembled as I looked upon this man – gripped in his hand. The most remarkable thing I could say about this other individual was that he was blind, or I assumed he was blind, denoted by a white silk blind-fold before his eyes and the fact that he had his head tilted down so as to better listen to the room instead of see the room. He wore many layers of white silk and white linen robes.

“Anhogamon, Fellania, let me please introduce you to Teran Mushunoshi, C.E.O. of Starlight Industries and head of the Starlight Foundation.”

“It is an honor sir.” Anhogamon greeted with a quick bow.

This new guest, with a brilliant smile that was soft, warming, calming and knowing, stepped forward and extended his hand. As he did, my eyes narrowed as I spied a tattoo on the inside of this man's wrist... a tattoo of six digit number done roughly as if by an unskilled hand. My lips parted as I looked at this man who didn't appear to be older than forty, but that sort of tattoo was used only in one place in the world during a particular time. It was first used in a camp called Auschwitz.

“I've heard tale of your exploits.” This man named Teran, with his wide and slightly angled blue eyes said. “Pen has let me know of the awesome scale of both you and your new mate's exploits. On behalf of the Earth Mother, you are thanked for your aide in ridding her of such a blight, and administering such medicine unto her grieving body. Guard this Shrine well.”

“On behalf of the Earth Mother?” I repeated quietly. The only person who gave me an odd look was that red knight, and I felt suddenly the hackles on the back of my neck stand on end.

But nevertheless... this was a man... speaking for the Earth Mother? For Gaia herself? Who was this person who presumed that he could speak for a the Earth Mother?”

“Ah... forgive me then,” he said then and turned to me and offered his hand to me, but the moment I placed my hand in his he turned mine and with a click of his heels and a bowing over my hand – very European, German gentry even – he lightly kissed my knuckles and rose. “The Earth Mother and I are very close.” He said and I blinked. “And... forgive the intrusion... but you were thinking very loudly.”

He read my mind?!

“I cannot help it, my lady.” He said as he released my hand, saw me notice his tattoo as he looked at it briefly. “Yes... I keep it in remembrance of a time of affliction I bore. So long as I remember, it shall not be forgotten.

“But to both of you... you have her... and our combined gratitude for your aide in healing the world.” At that the five members bowed, and the woman curtsied in ways fit for any court.

“Thank you sir,” I curtsied in return as Anho bowed in return. “But in all reality, Anhogamon was the one who bore this torch. Sue, Madoushi and I only came along.”

“Then your names shall be remembered in our recorded histories. Your exploits may never be recognized by the majority of the world, but nevertheless, your exploits are nevertheless thanked, and remembered.”

I am Pendragon.

Since Lee had been let out of his cell, I'd grown concerned about his steady state of melancholy. He'd been broken, absolutely broken now, and there was only one shred of hope that I believed he had, and that was the fact that Sue still bore what was possibly his child.

The presence of Anya here was a double blow to him, and I'd feared that in light of yet another woman that he'd dared to fall in love with getting married, with his former lovmate here as well, I... assumed... that he would make a fool of himself. So I had Bob do something about it. In my distraction with preparing for a triple wedding and not actively searching the futures, in hindsight... that wasn't the brightest thing I'd ever done.

As such, when Lee didn't appear for several days, I decided to go investigate.

So what I found was that in one of the lower tower rooms of my shrine, Lee had been suspended in fairy dragon webbing with a gag about his mouth, and he just hung there like caught prey. When I entered the room, he merely opened his eyes and stared forlornly at me.

“Bob...” I groaned in annoyance, cradling Lilly in my arms and petting her with one hand as she purred.

The porthole to this room opened and Bob came up from below, his ears and antennae and horns perking up with a jiggling motion.

“Yeah boss?” He blinked innocently at me and I raised an eyebrow at him as he didn't even look at Lee.

“Forget something?” I asked.

Bob made a show of thinking, putting a finger to his mouth as he thought and thought... and finally...

“Nope. Not a thing.”

I rolled my eyes and gestured with my staff. “I told you to watch him during the wedding. That was three days ago.”

“Pshaw...” he smirked. “You told me to watch him... and since I wasn't going to pass up free food and free beer and sake, I had to make sure he didn't interfere somehow... and how do I know how long these Japanese weddings

are? I assumed since the brides and grooms were still fucking and we were still having banquets and all that, that it was still going on. No one told me how long this shin dig went.”

“Don’t you think you should’ve asked?”

“Don’t you think you should’ve told me?” *Bob smirked impishly with a raised eyebrow.* “Now admit it... he’s been out of people’s hair, you don’t have him going psycho hose beast all over that Madoushi guy, he’s not trying to hump every female in the shrine, your Lilly there included...”

My eyes narrowed. “How do you know this Bob?”

“You have your precog, I have three hundred children that are in places that even roaches won’t go.”

I pursed my lips and raised a brow at him and then jerked my staff back at Lee. “Get him down.”

“Sure thing!” *and Bob snorted, hocked and spit a loogie at the webbing and it disintegrated as if it were being burned, and Lee fell to the ground. Bob then did a skateboarders Alle – a one handed hand stand while grabbing his feet – and dove out of sight.*

Lee merely sat roughly back, dejected as I summoned some food and water for him. He didn’t even look at it.

“And yea behold, I looked upon the dejected as he tortured himself, and yea his lament was like unto the gnashing of teeth like of hell itself.” *I mentioned and stepped toward him.*

“Quoting the bible, you old Wyrn?” *he eyed me.*

“Not exactly. I had a chance to walk and talk with Christ when he was still alive. The most gentle of men I’d ever known... and he had a divine wisdom that I learned much from. But we came upon a man like you once... subjecting himself to a state of self torture.” *I paused.* “Christ got him to eat... got him to drink, gave him the cloak off his back even... sadly I cannot force you to eat and drink, Lee, and my cloak is too small for you.”

“So by this I assume your wrath over me is quelled?”

“I am still annoyed at you, Lee... but you are merely an annoyance, and your welfare is still my responsibility so long as you remain here. Eat. You’ve not eaten for three days yet.”

“I’ve gone a week without food and water.” *He told me dejectedly.*

“And suffered dehydration and hunger in your dream quest I’d assume. Tell me... when you went along your dream quest... did you receive one?”

Lee didn’t answer. I waited for a good long time for him to do so, but when he didn’t, I did a little mind probing.

“How did you get to be a warder if you didn’t even get in touch with your totem spirit, Lee? That’s a requirement for your tribe. Unless... you lied.”

“So you would add additional shame to me?”

“Your shame is your own, Lee. If you feel shame it is because you brought shame upon yourself of your own volition. You are disjointed, out of spec... you were so even before you met Anya. How can a man not in peace with himself find a woman to be at peace with?” *he was silent again. “Think about it.” I added and turned to leave but slowed to a pause before turning to him.*

“Strange... I never made the correlation before... but an Indian Vision Quest is very much like an Australian’s Walkabout.”

“You would correlate such things... to me?” *he scoffed.*

“Don’t be an asshole. Truly... I suggest you don’t. Bob... your little tormentor there, hates assholes. He does a very nasty thing to assholes, and sadly for you, being a supernatural creature, you’d be aware of him doing it to you, and I don’t think you’d want to be subject to that sort of – forgive me for saying this – mind-fuck.

“You are disjointed... out of your realm... and before you open your mouth, no that isn’t your fault. You’re lost, Lee... you are where you do not belong. The tribe that you were meant to protect has been cursed by the spirits of the land.”

“What?” *Lee breathed.*

I nodded. “The mighty Windigo has fallen from their grace. The trait of the Windigo shall not be found in his children, and the land has been cursed against his pride for the sins of his fathers. A female has been chosen to lead their Pride... and Windigo has stepped down to take your place as Warder. The Great Ghost Dancer himself has passed this judgment on your people, Lee... or... are they really your people?”

“Why do you torment me further?” *Lee suddenly sobbed, and real tears fell from his eyes. Finally.*

“You are taking personally what is out of your control, Lee. This isn’t failure, this isn’t your fault... none of it is. I correlated the Dream Quest with the Walkabout, Lee, but just like a Walkabout isn’t for you... neither then is a Vision Quest. Your people are the Bengals of China, India and Japan. You don’t belong with a Siberian Tiger, and you don’t belong with a Calico Felix.

“The Chinese are an ancient people, Lee, and of the kingdoms of Man, they are the eldest and the longest culture on earth. My assumptions are that if you are going to learn of yourself, is that for you to get in tune with the spirits of the world, then perhaps you should go to where the people of your birth were. Seek out the ways of the Bengals. Perhaps then, Lee... you can find your place in this world.”

And leaving him with that, I stepped to the portal and fell to the ground below, going on with my daily duties. But I left that little annoying thought in his mind. Perhaps now he wouldn’t be so abrasive against the land, and go to where he belonged... pending a few language lessons in Chinese of course.

I stood palming my tummy as Anho cradled it with me, kissing my strong back as I looked out the window across the yard of the shrine. There was an Osprey here... outside the shrine in the fields outside its gates, in which a butler type person with a flight suit on under his butlering jacket stood at the ready as the five strangers filed out of the shrine.

There was a feminine squeal as the procession halted, and suddenly Anya of the Mediev family hurried across the lawn to embrace with that Teran guy, and he gladly accepted her with laughter. He nodded to the others and they proceeded along to the Osprey tilt-rotor, and I watched this man as even Tanya caught up with her younger sister. There was gratitude between these two women and that strange, strange man who kept even stranger company. The five of them were like unto gods... not Fae in the guise of gods... no... this was something else.

Fae struck me as assholes... these five weren't assholes. Well... maybe the red one was.

Strangely enough, the moment I thought that, the Red Knight paused and turned toward me, and I felt his burning red eyes on me before he lifted a hand from within his decorated robes and wagged a talloned and armored finger that was inside a heavy gauntlet I blinked in surprise before the knight turned and followed with the rest before this Mister Mushunoshi left.

Mushunoshi... his name was strange. I knew enough of other languages to see European and Asian in his name. Teran was a reference to Tera Firma, a titaness of the Earth and the reference of Gaia. A Teran was what every last being on earth was whether they were insect, animal or sentient being. Mushunoshi was a different language entirely... Chinese I believe. Mushu meant '*dragon*,' No meant '*of*,' and Shi meant '*death*.'

The Earth Dragon of Death? How does such a man claim to be a voice of Gaia, a highly feminine entity so massive that it in essence was the planet itself?

I shook my head and just gestured to the windows and they closed, and a few moments later, Anho was pulling me back into the bed again

I am Madoushi.

For some reason, as my beloved passed on into the second month of her pregnancy, still not showing the bundle within her womb – we were thinking of names to call her, I agreed with Sue that Jenny and Alice or even Pandora would belittle her and would be wrong to call her as such – Lee had taken to avoiding us at all costs as of late.

Even when we crossed paths in the lunchrooms, he would look at us briefly, and then leave promptly, forgoing getting food even. That other woman Anya got a similar look from him, only with her it seemed... sadder than the ones he gave Sue and me... especially when he looked upon her caring for and nursing her children.

There were days and days in which we didn't see hide nor hair of him at all, he'd reappear here or there and then disappear again. As of late, though, I saw him reading books on Chinese language lessons of all things.

“Good riddance. The less I have to see him the better.” Sue remarked one day.

That Anya woman had a very similar respect for the towering Lee. In regards to Lee and myself, he and I did get into more than one stare down... in which he always lost. He always looked away in shame, and I won the contest with nary any effort at all. I was rather getting the impression that he was lamenting something, and he looked at me whenever he gave that look.

Regardless... not since Lilith had I ever held so much disdain for a person. I was glad he was avoiding us too. Now only if he would leave us completely.

It was the question of who was the father of Sue's daughter that kept him here. If I could destroy that, then I could be rid of him. She was my child. I knew it... she was my child... I felt a connection to my wife even before this strange bonding ceremony... and there was in my mind only one way that could be:

Our blood had combined. She bore the comingling of our bloodlines within her womb... so it was my daughter that she carried. Now if only I could prove it.

So nightly I went into the Dreamtime.

The shaman had given me tasks that I was ignoring for the purpose of solving this contention, and at least I'd solved one of them. I went to sleep in the real world and awoke in the Dreamtime in shorter and shorter time spans now. The monks of the shrine had instructed me in meditation, and it'd rather aided me in the discovering of these powers that I had. Meditation, when used properly... allowed one to sleep deeper and faster. It was a useful tool.

So within minutes now I entered into the Dreamtime that night, entering into the Celestial Palace that Pendragon kept hidden from the waking world. It was the reason why the interior of his home was greater than the exterior, but awaking in the room I shared with Sue, with the grand bed made for an army, I crawled naked over to her, my groin dangling beneath me with a new shamanic loincloth just hanging over it and my shamanic bag over that, I came upon her dream self as she slept between real world and dream world.

This was a transitional place for most people. It took them many minutes if not hours to transition between sleep and awake, and even then they barely even touched the Dreamtime for more than a blip of an instant. But here, I could do things to people, that in the wrong hands I knew and understood immediately could be seriously abused. But regardless, my shining lifemate, with her powerful aura that made her look just as strong in the Dream as she was in the Waking World, I crawled over her and cupped her breast, massaging it and watched as she reacted to the touch, my fingers sliding down her bodice to her vulva and its flexing labial muscles.

I smiled down upon my wife and then palmed her belly before sitting there, and tried to delve into her womb, focusing my thought, trying to discern past the blackness in her womb.

But blackness didn't mean bad... you must understand that quickly. Blackness in the dream didn't mean evil, evil was something most people understood, understanding meant you could see it, so evil always showed itself in dark tumultuous and chaotically churning hews. No... blackness wasn't evil... it represented something that I don't understand.

But the entirety of my love's womb was a dark hole in her middle, nestled within her belly, and in all honesty, the fact that I couldn't see it frightened me. It abysmally frightened me.

"Problems?" someone asked and I turned immediately to see the Shaman smiling and blinking at me. "You've not been coming to the hill, Madoushi. So I decided to track you down. Why are you here playing with your mate's body when you should be there on the hill?"

He never spoke of 'my' in regards to anything involving the earth, but nor did he speak of it as 'Pendragon's' hill either. He understood what the Earth belonged to... it belonged to the Earth and no one else regardless of political boundaries. He understood a lot of what I didn't... so it was that understanding that made me turn to him and ask about my daughter.

"I know she's a girl. I know that she's my daughter... why cannot I see her? What is it that you see oh wise guru."

He chuckled. "Guru?" he laughed. "Still haven't discerned my name?"

"I consider this more important." I said simply and he frowned and looked upon Sue as she sighed in the Dream.

"I see." He said and worked his jaw briefly before sitting back. "I see... darkness, Madoushi." He responded in all honesty. How could he do otherwise? The Dreamtime didn't allow lies.

"How is it that you don't see what is inside my mate's womb?"

The Guru laughed. "I don't profess to know everything, Madoushi. But I know a lot."

I chewed on my cheek a moment. "Now I'm even more worried."

"There are some things you aren't meant to understand, Madoushi. By divine design or by just mere happenstance, there are things one just cannot wrap their mind around.

"But I will tell you one thing, Madoushi." And I looked at him instead of palming Sue's belly. "This child isn't evil. If it was, then we would see evil if nothing else... blackness wrapped in evil is plain enough to see, but this is a child. It isn't wrapped in good or evil... its fate remains unknown."

"How can that be? I understand what a female is, I understand that she is my daughter."

"Do you?" he asked and I blinked. "Lies cannot exist in the Dreamtime, Madoushi, but they can still exist in you."

"What? I... I don't understand."

"Seeing isn't always believing, but believing is always seeing. There are certain circumstances, Madoushi, where you will not understand a thing because you refuse to understand a thing. The Dreamtime translates itself according to your perception... that is why it is always changing, always moving... and different to each person's point-of-view. If you refuse to see the nose before your very face, it will disappear and become black. You understand more about this child than I do... so are you not letting yourself understand something?"

My face became tortured and I felt on the verge of crying. What if I was... but the only thing I was refusing to believe at the moment was that this child wasn't mine... and instead was Lee's. My breathing quickened and I strained, it was perhaps the most emotionally anguishing thing to do, but I forced myself to believe and understand that there was still the possibility that this child wasn't mine.

Seconds passed, then minutes... and finally I exhaled a sigh.

"It... it didn't change. It's still black." I breathed deeply in relief.

"A lesson learned." Guru mentioned. "And that is how much effort it takes to understand truth when you lie to yourself, Madoushi. Another lesson learned: even when you accept the truth, it still doesn't change something else you don't know."

"So does this mean she really is mine?" I gasped.

"Possibly... Possibly yours. But despite that you accepted the possibility and still she didn't change... that means that there is something about this child that doesn't allow you to see the whole truth... so therefore the dreamtime

makes you blind to it. Maybe you won't know any time soon, maybe you'll never know... but at least you've faced the truth and you may continue on.

"If you prefer, we can still have your lessons here... in the glory of this feminine body." *And he smirked lecherously at Sue.* "I must admit, I've yet to see a woman so filled with inner power to become so incredible as this short of the Great Wyrms."

I looked from Sue to him and back again before pursing my lips and rising a raised eyebrow as I saw him blushing across the cheeks.

"No... I think we can sojourn back to the hill. So I don't know the whole truth, but there is one thing that remains."

"What is that?"

"Yes Sue's daughter might be Lee's, but it still might be mine. And keep your eyes skyward. That is my mate you're ogling."

"Boy... you should know that all are naked in the glory of the Dreamtime." *He laughed, and led the way to the hill where we could continue our lessons.*

Bob and his brood were apparently here to stay. Damn it.

I will say one thing that as the men were playing poker with him, namely Dmitri, Daniel, Dad and my brothers and a few others in the shrine who liked to gamble. He'd... inadvertently challenged them all to strip poker, but imagine their surprise when no ladies showed up at the same time. But despite that, Bob had brought lots of beer, sake and vodka... so it wasn't a loss to them... notwithstanding that he got the lot of them down to their various forms of underwear amidst at the same time on the other side of a wall were loads of fems who were getting their eye candy in.

Bob made one small miscalculation though. Though the monks liked their beer and they passed out quickly, he remarkably miscalculated how much Vodka a Russian Tiger could drink... or how much plain alcohol my dad and brothers could drink.

He also miscalculated how astute these men still remained even when drunk, and that eventually one of them pointed out that Bob was already naked... and when they picked him up to investigate him, they likewise found that with four arms... Bob was cheating.

A long story short, imagine my surprise when I woke up the next morning, looked out the front door, only to find Bob tied securely to a pole.

"Hayyyy! What about Bob?!"

I merely raised an eyebrow and smirked at him. "What about Bob?" and closed the window on him again, leaving him squirming while still tied to the pole.

My new husband, despite his diminutive stature, had quickly shown himself to be able to drink both Russian Tigers and American Bears under the table. He was found sitting in the shrines dining hall, legs in lotus position, his hand

gripping his sword at one side with scabbard down, and his other hand on a keg of sake that he was still taking various sips at. He was blushing deeply and rather... um... boisterous when drunk.

And might I remind you that for a Lycan to get drunk took some heavy duty drinking. A human would be suffering from alcohol poisoning at the same time a Lycan drank. But in Anho's time... Drinking and whoring were the only joys in life lest you were some sort of psychopath that enjoyed killing like a warlord... and Anho didn't whore. He was laughing at the great bears and tigers that they couldn't hold their drink...

He had a very loud and very addictive laugh.

I sat next to him still in dress and took his keg and knocked back a good sized slug, he started to growl, but it ended up making him hiccup, which made me laugh, and the laugh he had belted out before returned. Dmitri and Daniel were watching from across the room, they raised their Vodkas and saluted. Anho raised the sword to his forehead and then lowered it. The men drank to his salute, to our families, and anything else.

We were family, if not by blood, then by friendship, we would all look out for each other, even Remy, speaking of Remy, he looked so cute in his Sumo diaper while he grappled good naturedly with Mady in practice readying to face my brother, who was about to find out, size means very little...

Apparently in their drunken stupor, they decided to have that sumo championship my father challenged Dmitri with.

Since Anho was now the Shrine's Master of Steel and the Shrine Guardian, and both Sue and I were here for the duration of our pregnancies at the very least, we were more than happy to remain ensconced here at Pen's Shrine. Hell... I was in the process of having all my things transferred from Minnesota to here... like I had a lot anyways.

Ivan was the Queen of the Tigers pet, so he was stricken between Japan where Mew would remain with Sue and Mother Russia... but then he was a magical kitty and could teleport, so he vanished every now and again for a few days or so and came back to tend to his mate and his new kittens... which usually involved him running about getting soft things and crème for Mew.

But speaking of cats, in the wake of our triple marriage and all the guests having departed, that brought into focus once again that Lilly Jade person... who had remained in cat form for the duration, but was now walking about like the kitty-hulk that she was, and such a strange creature she was at that.

Pen had long since healed from the poisoned knife wound that Remy's now dead grandfather Gregore had given him, but Lilly still carried Pen around from time to time like he was a stuffed animal – when he thought no one was looking that is – but honestly, I never knew such a pure-minded person. She wasn't simple... she was surprisingly intelligent in fact, she was just... innocent. But she wanted to know Sue and me more directly, and was very open about being social. I got the feeling she was studying us with a sort of scientific curiosity.

Sue told me that she'd never had sex yet, and thought that kissing was all it took to have a baby. She went around a few days after that revelation and began kissing random males from boys to elders in the shrine from short little kissing pecks to deeply passionate embraces but then gave a short "Aww," palming her tummy before walking off, leaving a rather sated man in her wake.

Come to think of it... I think I saw her do this to a person or two.

But not only Sue and me, but Sen as well... and on top of that there was the now roly-poly Poon that she was paying rapt attention to. More than once I caught her watching Anho and me in our private daily tea meeting with her eyes

and fingers just barely peaking up over a wall. She looked like a kitty version of the Kill Roy image used by Americans in World War II.

She struck me as a person so innocent that she probably didn't even know what arousal meant let alone felt like, but could eat a snowflake and breakdown its exact chemical composition based on taste.

She was such a dear too... you felt comfortable with her around, you felt safe and free, and all the harsh realities of the world seemed to melt away when you were in her presence... but she seemed like a schizophrenic though. Her personality shifted so incredibly between the three forms she took, that you would swear they were different people. Her hybrid form was the one you wanted to associate with. That was the bouncy, happy shape that just sucked all the hatred and anger out of the room and filled it with... hope.

Her human form was this scientific sort of mentality that though friendly and cute, was a bit... sterile. Like she was a creature that was all logic, like some sort of Vulcan or something.

Her cat form just loved being in laps and being petted and stroked and likewise loved to rub her scent on you and purr.

She made friends at the drop of a hat with anyone who came to the shrine... anyone that she was allowed to meet anyways. Pen had this fear for her, as did Sue and I for that matter... she was too innocent, and without someone watching over her she was going to get taken advantage of.

Regardless, at the moment it felt like our adventures were over... for the time being at least. As the big bear in the group I somehow managed to get myself a position of a den mother in the shrine. I was the Big Sister and Mommy depending upon who you were.

For now, Anho and I were living at the shrine... Pen had lots of space... I mean lots and lots of space. Madoushi said that this building was far, far, *far* bigger than it looked. I didn't realize what he meant till I got lost in its halls one day, and I think I managed to turn a corner and see myself turn a corner down the hall... and then when I looked again, I also saw myself passing across the hall from left to right to disappear behind the same corner my previous self did. I looked back to make sure I wasn't about to walk up to myself, and the reason why I thought it was me, was how many few supremely muscled fems there were there in this place aside from Sue and me was like zero and none.

It was this and the thought that we were being a bother that led Anho and I to rediscover my ancestral home... a den hidden on the slope of Mount Fuji.

There were cave paintings here, drawings of great powerful bear people, a monkey with a staff, and little doodles as if done by a child. There was such an inexplicable feeling of Déjà Vu here. Pools in which I remembered bathing in, chambers I remembered sleeping in, birthing and nursing my child, making love with Anho. But that was a half-remembered life of an ancestor.

We could live here, I suppose, but from the times of my first mother and now, Mount Fuji had become a sacred mountain, the quietly sleeping giant that had been so prominent in Japanese culture for so many thousands of years. As such, permanent structures upon its slopes were prohibited beyond the occasional Torii Gate – which was a shrine gate prevalent in Japanese traditions – or an awning or post to mark a path to the summit.

“This mountain has settled itself...” Anho commented as he picked up a piece of broken crockery that sat on a recessed shelf. What it had contained had long ago decayed away. “It’d been covered with dense trees and populated by wild life. She’s been tamed.”

“She?” I commented looking to him after washing my hands in the hot spring here.

“She was your first mother’s mountain, with a tough skin, the power of life with a heart and veins of raw fire. The two were quite a pair.”

It’d take some work, but this place could be habitable again... but then Japanese officials would find us out the first time we tried to cook. I never lived this life, I only half-remembered it. Anho appeared... sad... looking upon it. Perhaps it was best that this cavern remained forgotten.

The shrine was so much more comfortable anyways, but now that I was pregnant and was going to lay back, I wanted to take Anho on a world trip... just for a month or two... introduce him to the changes of the world before my pregnancy laid me up. Perhaps Sue and Mad could come along...

But for now... I was happy... I was content and even marginally excited for the future. I had a husband, I was going to be a mommy and all those nagging little psychological needs from either past genetic requirements from my first mother or from just genetic needs from being a female and having my biological clock ticking away were satisfied.

For now all was safe.

Chapter 9: Fin

A final few notes perhaps...

The months passed by without any further incident. Thankfully Anho and I weren’t here for the great Fairy Dragon Clutching. Lilly was very excited about it when we returned, explained it in all its strange details though as she tugged me along with her to show me. I really didn’t want to see, especially now that I was garnering morning sickness, but I’ll have to admit, the results were rather... breathtaking.

Fairy Dragons spawned like frogs did... and the room that was serving as Bob and Poon’s room was now covered in brilliant silvery orbs that clung to everything in here, and the room itself had likewise been woven into a crystalline web of supporting trails that glittered silver like in the light filtering through the slats of the windows of this little room. It sent everything into lovely rainbow and crystalline hews that was nonetheless breathtaking.

Oh I wouldn’t give a proud and strutting Bob the pleasure of recognizing his accomplishment of fathering a few hundred more of these damnable little buggers, but still... I had to quietly congratulate Poon, who was, even days later, still recovering from the exertion of literally laying several hundred eggs.

At least they were smooth...

But the top tower of the shrine had turned into a fairy dragon hive – complete with honey chambers, the fairy dragons were nonetheless grand caretakers of natural land – but regardless, everyone knew not to go near that hive. Poon was a bit... overprotective at the moment.

“And demanding...” Bob commented, right before he got hit in the head with a frying pan, despite that he was in the shrine’s lower levels and she was up in the loft still. “...Coming dear. I have... *pickles!*”

Fairy dragon females apparently got their cravings during and after clutching... spawning... whatever it was they called it.

But regardless... the reason why Anho and me were gone for so long was that we took an eighty day trip around the world, an around the world in eighty day vacation package. Tokyo, LA, Edmonton, Saint Paul, Rio, New York, London, Paris, Madrid, Berlin, Cairo, Moscow, Hong Kong, Sydney and finally back to our new home. Eighty days later made me eighty days more pregnant, and nearing the last of my first trimester I was just beginning to show.

Sue and Madoushi went back to Australia about the same time we met there, and we were able to be together again in Sydney. Sue had swollen a great deal already, and though she still had the shapes of her belly muscles still, they were rapidly thinning out on an almost daily basis.

Remy and Sen kept to themselves, largely, though Sen, because she was one of the three remaining pregnant fems – the new broodlings were in egg form now, so Poon was no longer considered pregnant, the three of us were able to compare bellies as they steadily got bigger and thicker and fuller. Sue was still a month beyond Sen and me, and though morning sickness came and gone for me, Sen and Sue didn't get the *privilege* of having to deal with an upset stomach.

Man I hated this body sometimes.

At about three to four months though was when form lock kicked in for each of us. And sure enough, right after returning from Sydney – much to Pen's predictions – Sue force transformed into her hybrid form one night, tore the dickens out of her night gown during her sleep and form locked. It was a requirement of our species... the female transforms due to requirements of growing a hybrid cub. For Sen it wasn't much of a problem because rats just got more nimble and lithe, so she could still wear all her usual clothes... imagine my embarrassment when I formed locked midway through dinner one night.

The halls of Pen's shrine were nonetheless built for tall, really tall and weighty individuals. Good thing too when you had two grandly muscular fems who were at least twelve feet tall in their hybrid forms and weighed several metric tons... a tonnage that just kept getting bigger as the preggo and titty fairies arrived for Sue and me... and I don't mean Fairy Dragons, or at least I hope to God not. Breast weight and belly weight just kept climbing as our bodies transformed from women to motherly bodies... and I might've put on some softening fat here and there.

Sue got cravings for strawberries; Sen got cravings for Chocolate... Poon still had cravings for pickles. I at least didn't get cravings... yay for a healthy mommy having a healthy baby that didn't need anything extra in order to grow.

It was largely a period of study for Sue and me as we spent hours being made privy to by the shrine maidens and monks of the shrine... Pen's orders. He was a good host, but when it came to a pregnant female, he was pampering and spoiling. Our every need was taken care of even if our husbands weren't there, so while Sue and I were pouring over books in the library, trying to determine the next position of Sue's next scroll... I felt a kick... and the kick knocked over a stack of books.

Regardless, it was the first sure sign of a healthy and strong baby in me...

Later that night, with me in a grand bed made of many blankets and furs and pillows, naked and being soothed by my husband as he massaged me all over... and at the same time massaged my innards with that great big cock of his,

I cooed and sighed with his fingers stretching my skin out to aide in the growth of my tummy that weighed an added pound in water weight every new day.

I was that big!

But it was as my love was stroking my sex, soothing me sexually and loading me with comforting endorphins from the pleasure, he was palming my belly that was now devoid of the muscle ribbing as he bent and kissed the mound, and massaged the flesh containing our child.

“When you’re ready... I would like to try for a son.” He told me and I opened my eyes and smiled at him, feeling milk leaking from my breasts as my body became super aroused from the love making.

“Our daughter isn’t even born yet. Already you’re thinking of a greater family?” I chuckled. “Are you going to keep me perpetually barefoot and pregnant?”

“Strangely... it fits you... but not in the way this world defines it... some domestic servant instead of a wife, working all day in the kitchen who’s only purpose is to clean and birth. Your first mother was barefoot and pregnant, and defended me with staff in hand. Later she bore our daughter on her back and guarded me while I recovered still. I never knew her to wear shoes or sandals...”

“I like that image.” I smirked. “Fine then... you can keep me perpetually barefoot and pregnant!” I murred and arched what little I could as he slid deeper... but not too deep. He didn’t penetrate me to the hilt anymore... and so long as our daughter in my womb remained undisturbed was so long as when he did this for me.

That would eventually change when I turned six months pregnant.

I am Sue.

I’d slipped into a state of utter euphoria... which was the state that a female cat slid into when she neared birth, according to what Pen had said. I was getting instincts in me that I had to fight, and those instincts were to go find a den, but nevertheless, my womb was thick and rounded, filling the entire confines of my tummy from hip to rib cage, bulging out of those hardened muscles and bony palates to form a soft, rounded protection for my little love.

I was rubbing my belly button that had turned from an innie to an outie, enjoying the feel of soft silks around me in the form-hugging clothes I wore, and the soft silken cupping chair I laid in while my tail lulled quietly about my broad and powerful thighs. I was softening as my pregnancy continued, but beneath that softening fat of a leisurely lady like me was thickening musculature that was broadening and deepening my chest, allowing for the four largest of my mammaries to swell outward. I had to wear a body sheathe now to cover my belly because of the perpetually erect nipples lining my tummy. I played with those too, finding that the pert little mounds behind them needed to be milked as well from time to time.

Mady’s kisses on my body were that much more arousing, even in this stage of my pregnancy.

I couldn’t focus on my studies any more, I was in a half-daze most of the time anyways, and Mady was jumping at any little movement I did now. Nervous father syndrome... he was so cute.

Mew and her kittens were on the chair's foot stool beside me. It hurt my legs and the underside of my tummy to have my incredibly muscular legs so elevated so I let her have it, and not for the first time that day did I untie the side tie panties I wore and let my naked sex be breathed upon by the cooling air of the shrine.

I was starting to dilate... slowly. Technically I was in labor now... but there were certain women who started this slow slide into labor weeks ahead of time. But sitting there with my hands cupping the base of my belly, since my belly rounded right into my loins anyway, it was a simple matter to stroke my sex. It wasn't out of sexual elation or to touch or play with myself, no... I was hoping that I could coax my baby out of me that way.

So far it didn't work, but it nonetheless improved my euphoric sensations.

But as I laid there – doctors orders, I was still premature by a few weeks, and this bun needed to stay in her oven for a little longer, so I was on bed rest – suddenly a door appeared right before my eyes and I blinked at it, wondering if one of the Fairy Dragons were about to do a trick, but when the door opened, an old woman slid out of it, turned and closed the door, and the door collapsed back into the earth again.

So far I was waiting for the fairy dragon's usually zany punch line...

She shuffled over to me covered in old rags and shawls, but when she looked up at me I blinked as I recognized her.

“Grandmother Yaga?” I ventured. “What are you doing here?”

She smiled and cackled. “Well first of all, I am dropping this lazy Tom off.” She said and hoisted Ivan who was dangling by the scruff of his neck and he shrugged and grinned at me before Yaga dropped him and when he didn't move fast enough of brushing himself off and tightening his fur, she shooed him off and he went to go sit with Mew and his kittens. “And second off child, and forgive me for being so delinquent, but leaving my home is about as difficult for your host to leave his. It's something that isn't done lightly, or without preparation.”

“Delinquent for what?” I blinked.

“Like your host is bonded to the islands of Japan, I am bonded to all of Mother Russia. I know of her every joy, but I also know of her every weep and woe... and when the land cries for more than fifty years, only to utter a sigh of relief in your name, I had to investigate.”

“But... I don't understand. Why would the land sigh with relief in my name?”

“Chernavog.” She said simply and even in my euphoria it donned on me. “That land was a blight till the source of its blight was destroyed. Bless you. Thank you. The return of its purifying earth and the powers of its spirits strengthen me like never before. They've allowed me to come here and repay your kindness.”

“Well... I had help. Tanya did a lot of the work, and we couldn't've even had done it without Katrina.”

“Tanya was being trained to deal with the blight herself. I feared for her safety, but thankfully you laid the final blow, protected my daughter.”

“Tanya needed protecting?” I smirked.

“Even the very strong and the very powerful could still use protecting, Susan.” Pen's voice carried into our conversation, and we both turned to see him stepping quietly up to us. “Hello old one... It's been awhile.”

“Hello you old wurm, yes it has.” *She said and offered a gnarled hand, and Pen stepped forward, took her fingers and kissed her knuckles like a gentleman should.*

“I thought I felt something... something I haven’t felt since... but... never mind. What brings you to my home Grandmother Yaga?”

“You have need of a Midwife, at least temporarily.” *Yaga cackled and took a mint out of a drawstring hand bag and sucked on it.*

“But I have nurses and doctors who could...” *Pen paused and abruptly changed what he was saying.* “Who could deftly use the experience of a woman who assuredly knows more about conception, bearing young and birthing young than any other person I know of. Sue... this is a teaching opportunity if you do not mind. I would like to have you attended by Grandmother Yaga and one of my shrine maidens who will observe and do as she is told. Is that ok for both of you?”

“Madoushi catches.” *I said decidedly and finally, and Yaga cackled again.*

“Surely... this *will* be entertaining teaching a man who has no inkling of what it means to give birth how to receive the life out of the woman he impregnated. I agree.”

“Then I’ll be glad to have you tend to me grandmother Yaga. I couldn’t think of it going any other way.”

I am Madoushi.

This Grandmother Yaga was strange, but Susan trusted her. The truth about this woman was black, a mixture of good and evil at such a level that it twisted itself into knots about a personage of absolute black that I had no understanding of her, but ultimately the good balanced out with the evil, so I allowed it.

“You are the man. Whether or not you do or do not allow it is not your decision in this case.” *The old woman said sternly.* “This is birth and pregnancy, it is the realm of women and only women, and without us the races would not proceed at all.”

“And without us, you wouldn’t have this vaunted power of birth either.” *I barked out, using that wolf part of me to all its vaunted power. Strange that it was the wolf in me that controlled my rare outbreaks of temper. Slow to anger, but when I did...* “Birth is every bit my right as it is Sue’s. True she does most of the work, but I will not have some batty half-brained old witch place her hands upon my child or even my wife lest I don’t wish it, and I will go against even Sue’s opinion of you if I so much as feel a mote of something wrong in this matter. Which I don’t... but the longer you argue the point with me the more I will consider saying no just to spite you. Now... tell me what I need to know.”

Susan was in labor at this very moment. She’d begun it hours ago, and we were making a myriad of preparations. Lee was here, and he was putting me on edge. This Grandmother Yaga who’d been pushing me around for the past week was already annoying me, and, pardon the expression, I was now officially done with Lee’s and her shit.

“Good. That answer is satisfactory then.” *She smirked.* “Now come, she will want you near her as she...”

“Hey!” *Lee demanded.* “What about me? I have the right to know if it’s my child or not.”

I turned slowly, feeling my temper slip just a little bit more. “You will sit there, and be quiet... or so help me I’ll stuff you into what these people call a *Sucrets box!*” *I was rather surprised at my own roar, for it got Lee to sit down immediately and quiet himself.* “You will see my child only so long as it takes for us to summarily dismiss you! And if you stay here one moment longer...”

Sue’s moan came from the other room and I charged in, forgetting immediately about the old crone and Lee to get to her, only to find her being tended to by Fellania, who was sitting awkwardly in a chair barely large enough for one butt cheek let alone two with her fluffy tail, and swollen belly, but she was nonetheless holding Sue’s hand and comforting her despite being eight months pregnant herself.

“Don’t worry... her water broke is all.” *Fell said quietly and moped at Sue’s brow with a rag.*

I exhaled all my anger and went to Sue, sitting on the other side as Sue literally hyperventilated. I was told that this was normal... she should be breathing this way. It eased the birth and the micro clenching and releasing shimmied our daughter down her birth canal instead of laboriously pushing down on the child and forcing it out.

Sue’s body was working purely by automatic and she was nearly asleep at the moment as she murred and purred in near ecstasy. Not from anyone’s medicines mind you, there was no pain. Lycans with their healing factors and with other instincts depending upon were-species made this process steady and automatic. All in all, our females were quite lucky they didn’t have to birth like humans did.

There was a reason why humans called it ‘labor’ after all.

I took up the moping of her head and chest, keeping those things cool as Sue continued through hour five of giving birth to our daughter. At least... I hoped it was.

Another thing about Lycan births was that it was done quickly. The cub, in hybrid form herself, was streamlined for this process. Not having the great big head with an equal sized body, she would slip and turn inside her mother’s body, squeezed along simply and easily... it was just a matter of time.

At hour eight Sue’s loins began to crown and then parted and closed tentatively several times, before a nose and then a mouth and muzzle exited her, and I swallowed hard as I was pulled in by the wrist to catch our daughter. But as she slipped, as she slid into my hands, I felt my heart fall straight into my gullet at the sight of... stripes. I shook my head and cradled her nonetheless, pulled her from Sue and held her in my arms as she gave a little gurgling, throwing up seminal juices as Yaga helped me wash her off, snip the umbilical and Sue disgorged and promptly ate the afterbirth.

That was perhaps the only disgusting part of our specie’s birth... I only hoped Sue wouldn’t remember it.

I hoped though as this little girl was washed that the stripes would disappear, but she gurgled and then gave off a little cry, which was followed by another, and she began to move, eyes squinting as she looked for the tit, and I was just handing her to Sue so that she could cradle our little one to her fat-fat breast when the door to the room slid open, and Lee stood there. His face slowly spread into a triumphant smile before he turned to leave, letting the doors swing shut again.

“Oh no.” *Sue said with a certain melancholy.* “You don’t deserve this little one.” *She said and kissed our little child on the forehead.*

Sue was half asleep, and as I sat there by her side, I reached forward and wiped the tears from her eyes as I listened to the light snick-snick-snick of breast feeding till the little cub had her fill. In the other room there was some raised voices, and growling I rose and slid into the next room to find Pen and Lee in a debate.

“She’s my child. The baby was born with stripes! I have rights as the father!”

“You have rights as the sire, Lee.” Pen was saying and he lightly lifted a hand to me as I opened my mouth and I shut it. “Those rights don’t include you wrestling a child straight from the womb from her mother to go gallivanting across China with not so much as even a milk bladder in your possession. Understand this warning when I tell you... I won’t let you do it.”

“Nor will I!” I said and approached the argument.

“I have my rights now... and I claim them! And not you, or you, have any right to stop me, and if you do I’ll walk right through both of you.”

The answer that statement was simple, and very quiet. It consisted of a blade sliding out of its sheathe by about three inches, clearing the tension of drawing the blade from the scabbard. Lee looked in horror but I looked triumphantly at Anhogamon as he stood in a corner where it was dark and shaded, though his eyes opened slowly and pierced the darkness with that foggy blue color like piercing laser beams that caught Lee full in their unyielding stare and made him cower from them.

“Thank you Anhogamon.” Pen commented and Anho nodded. “I believe at this moment, Lee... I will begin with the statement of *‘I’d like to see you try.’* You’re annoying me again, and I can assure you that if I lose my temper a third time in a single year...” Pen lifted a brow in warning, and let what was unsaid state volumes of what he would do.

“You are denying my rights! Where is your vaunted justice then?”

“With Susan.” Pen replied sternly. “And more importantly... with the child. A child needs its mother, especially a girl child, and that is that. Disobey me on this matter Lee, and I will set this whole shrine and curse the land against you until that child is safely within her mother’s...” But then the doors burst open and Madoushi stood there, panting with disbelief on his eyes. “...Madoushi?”

“C-come... come quick!” he panted. “All of you.” He looked dazed and mad, and he smiled darkly as he looked at Lee. “Especially you.” And Mad pointed directly at Lee before retreating.

We followed, all of us, including Lee, and as I entered I was passed by Grandmother Yaga who planted a hand on my naked stomach. “You will be birthing soon. I can be made ready if you wish it.”

“I’ll speak to Sue... but first we need to see whatever Madoushi wants us to see.” I replied and she nodded, and we finished passing each other.

We were all in the birthing room with its white walls and soft lighting and chimes and running water gardens with bamboo in them, a few fairy dragons looking in on the chaos as Sue smiled at her daughter and Mad was tickling their daughter’s chin.

“What’s the meaning of this?” Lee said starkly. “She has stripes, she’s my daughter.”

“She yawned.” Madoushi snapped. “Come on... please baby... please... Yes!”

And the little bundle out of Sue began to yawn. “I don’t understand how a yawn can...” but the little baby bundle of fur kept yawning, opening her mouth wide, wider... impossibly wide, and I blinked at the ridiculous width that she possessed. Greater than a forty five degree or even a ninety degree yawn... this was an incredible one hundred and twenty degree yawn.

It was funny... she looked like Fizzig from the Black Crystal. I even chuckled.

“May I hold her?” Pen asked and Sue nodded, and Madoushi lifted the girl from Sue who fussed as she was being removed from her mother, but calmed as Pen cradled her in two of his scaly yet soft arms. Pen then unwrapped her a little, and with one of his little talons he searched for something just above her infant vulva, and soon with trepidation, his finger slipped inside a third, hidden slot on her underside... right at her tummy. Pen looked up at us all with a smirk. “She has a pouch. She’s a Thylacine. A Thylacine with a rather odd stripe pattern, but a Thylacine nonetheless. Madoushi is the father... not Lee.”

Sue burst out into a sob of joy and I went to comfort her as Pen floated with his wings briefly to return the baby to her. She cradled the little bundle and kissed her... and then her expression darkened into a glower. We followed her gaze to find Lee standing by himself, staring at the spot where Pen had revealed the final stroke as to the identity of the child’s real father.

Australian Fauna were unique in the world. It was proof and evidence that the Australian continent had remained separate from the whole world since the formation of it in the simple fact that it had creatures on it that were absolutely and irrevocably unique only to it. The Koala for example, and the Kangaroo... and most especially... the Thylacine.

There was no creature in the world that had a bite radius so large as the Thylacine, a creature so estranged in its identity that scientists couldn’t decide whether to name it a wolf or a tiger, and instead just called it a marsupial based upon its belly pouch. But the other fact remained was that cats like Sue and tigers like Lee... didn’t have belly pouches.

So the only other place that she could’ve gotten such traits as an extra wide maw and a belly pouch was from another Thylacine, and since Madoushi was the only one who possessed those things in the world, he was undeniably, irrevocably, unequivocally Madoushi’s daughter.

Lee eventually detected the silence and found himself the focus of everyone’s gaze. He looked to each of us pleadingly, but got only angry annoyed stares. And then... suddenly, as if this moment had been the final breaking point for him, I watched the light in his eyes dim, his form deflate, and with head low and shoulders hunched in shame, he stepped out of the room quietly without further comment.

I took a deep breath and exhaled it slowly, feeling tensions in the room release slowly, and then smiling I turned to the pair of new parents as I massaged my own belly.

“So... don’t just sit there... what are you going to name her?”

“Ras.” Sue said and cuddled her little girl. “Definitely Ras.”

<End>

Hey, do you want to meet Madoushi, Fellania, Susan, Lilly or Katrina? Come to **Panther.furnet.org**, at the **#femalemusclefurries** MIRC chat group!